

A Tangle of Lies

Everything Reagan tells
you about El Salvador is wrong



Photo: JOHN HOAGLAND

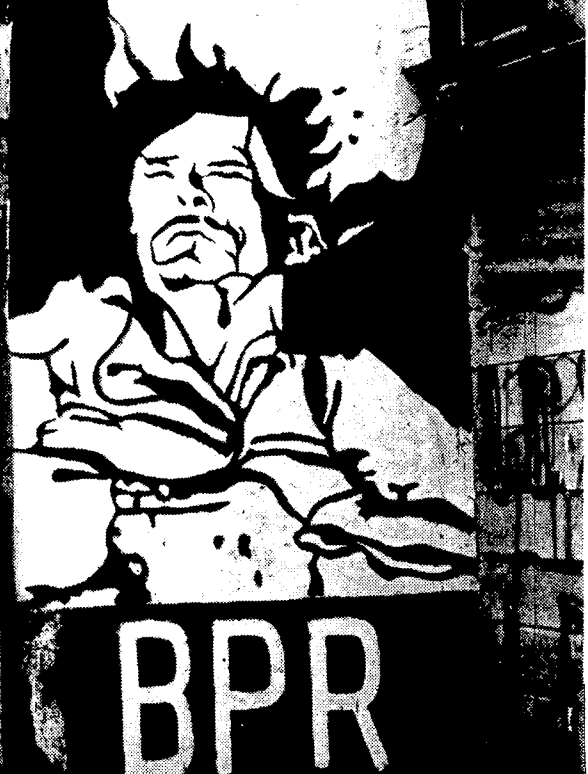
Death on the Installment Plan

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THE INSIDE STORY

ALTO
A LAS MASACRES,
CAPTURAS, CATEOS
Y OCUPACIONES
MILITARES



David Hayward

The U.S. chooses to ignore the facts

By David Moberg

If you believe Ronald Reagan and Alexander Haig, the United States is now escalating military and economic aid and sending "advisors" to help a moderate, reformist government in El Salvador to fight an unpopular group of "Marxist" guerrillas armed by and acting on behalf of the Soviet Union and Cuba.

But documents now circulating in Washington directly conflict with this interpretation. One is a report on "Democracy in Latin America: Prospects and Implications," prepared in December 1980 for the State Department by three experts from the University of North Carolina (Federico G. Gil, Enrique A. Balyora and Lars Schoultz). The second is an anonymous paper dated November 1980 that was prepared by various State Department officials, congressional staffers and dissidents in agencies such as the CIA. Called the "dissent channel" paper, it is not that in a technical, bureaucratic sense, but it is an authoritative account of U.S. policy and dissenting views as of last fall, according to Larry Birns, director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs.

The "democracy" paper traces the emergence of rule over El Salvador by a small, coffee-based oligarchy in the late 19th century through a Depression-era crisis that led to the massacre of at least 10,000 peasants in a 1932 rebellion. After that the military became an independent governing force that nevertheless remained tightly allied to the oligarchy. From 1948 to 1972, the civic-military experiment in "controlled democracy" was "unable to evolve a lasting social pact that could legitimize their rule, unwilling to turn power over to civilians, and unable to articulate a developmental strategy that would modernize the country and undermine the socioeconomic foundations of oligarchic power." That base of power, which excluded middle class or peasant participation, has led to the present crisis.

Middle class opposition grew in the 1960s, culminating in the 1972 election that was stolen from Christian Democrat Jose Napoleon Duarte. Although the middle-class parties turned to protest, they declined in popularity and effectiveness. The political vacuum was filled by

a growing number of peasant, worker and student organizations as well as by increasingly militant Catholic clergy and lay activists, some inspired by the new "liberation theology." But paramilitary right attacks pushed many popular groups toward the *via armada*—armed conflict.

"Between 1972 and 1979... the government became more dictatorial, creating a much more repressive context in an attempt to suffocate increasing opposition. Military officers occupied a greater number of high governmental positions." Elections were even more fraudulent. "Official" paramilitary groups such as ORDEN increased their violence, but the dominant characteristic was "the naked use of state power to destroy the emerging labor movement and independent popular organizations."

Popular groups sprang from the matrix of economic misery and perceptions of governmental illegitimacy. "The threat that [the popular organizations] posed was twofold, and it fell considerably short of a Marxist takeover or the imposition of state socialism. Their basic problem was a living wage and their only weapon was to organize. The Salvadoran oligarchy believed that profits and unions were incompatible. The Salvadoran military believed that any attempt to organize independently was, by definition, subversive."

The expanding opposition proposed a "democratic and popular project to substitute the existing Salvadoran model" in 1979. The "democracy" paper authors emphasize that the only way to bring about needed reforms, even of a modest sort, was to confront the right and the oligarchy. The only way to do that was to involve the popular organizations in government. But the reformist "military youth" (*Juventud Militar*) coup of October 15, 1979, immediately undermined its good intentions by refusing to include peasant, worker and religious organizations in the government. "The basic dilemma of late 1979 was whether to 'run a risk' with the popular organizations and form a coalition with them to destroy the oligarchy, or to keep them 'out' and continue to play the 'reform game' that the oligarchy had learned to defeat before."

Mistaken diplomacy.

The right has once again undermined the "reform game." (It is a perfect case to demonstrate the foolishness of the theory advanced by Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's United Nations representative, that "authoritarian" regimes [right-wing dictatorships] deserve U.S. support because at least they are open to democratic evolution, unlike "totalitarian" [left] regimes.) Military officers from the old regime, for example, prevented dissolution of ORDEN. "During the Junta's first year of existence all attempts to correct the situation and redefine the rules of the game have resulted in victories for the right." The "neopopulist reformers" were driven out of the government to the popular organizations and the guerrilla *Frente*.

"Reactionary despotism" increasingly represented the politics of those in control of the government, and groups like ORDEN offer pieces of a potential "fascist formula," with this drift to the right likely to be exacerbated by greater conservatism in Washington. Fundamentally, they conclude, "the attempt to create a center and then to treat a situation in which the extreme right has become a state within the state as 'moderate reformism' is a diplomatic mistake and a misreading of Salvadoran history that is not going to help the democratic cause in Latin America and elsewhere."

The "dissent channel" paper confirms many of the "democracy" report's conclusions and argues that cur-

rent policy "is based on inaccurate intelligence, and on the suppression within various bureaucracies of verified contradicting information." For example, the U.S. government last fall was underestimating "the domestic legitimacy and international support enjoyed by the opposition FDR/DRU coalition." "Contingency scenarios for U.S. military deployment tend to underestimate troop requirements, estimates of casualty rates, and the time and geographic scope of required engagement." U.S. policy overestimated Cuban involvement and underestimated the possibility of an escalated regional conflict.

"The articulation of U.S. policy for public and congressional audiences has misrepresented the situation in El Salvador emphasizing the viability of the current regime, downplaying its responsibility for the excesses being committed by security and paramilitary forces, exaggerating the positive impact of current reforms and portraying opposition forces as terrorists unsuitable for and unwilling to engage in constructive dialogue."

While propping up the current economic structure and searching for signs of moderation in the regime, the U.S. was laying the groundwork for possible military intervention and working to discredit the opposition as puppets of Cuba. Instead, the dissent channel paper argued, the U.S. should acknowledge that the Democratic Revolutionary Front/Unified Revolutionary Directorate (FDR/DRU) is a "legitimate and representative political force in El Salvador." That would also require separating the U.S. from the repressive right, stalling the growing right-wing support from Honduras and Guatemala, cutting back military aid, and discouraging intervention in the area by right-wing governments of the "southern cone" of Latin America and allies, such as Israel. The U.S. would not have the "political credibility" to be a mediator, but it could encourage more "pluralistic" news coverage of the country, contrary to official U.S. policy of restricting news. This could lead to a Zimbabwe-style negotiated settlement.

The junta has "failed to rally significant support for their reform and counter-insurgency programs"; business is fleeing; land redistribution "has failed to neutralize the peasant population"; and "neither the government nor the armed forces have been able to demonstrate their will or ability to avoid indiscriminate repression of civilian personnel." The Cubans and Soviets "are urging utmost caution to avoid a direct confrontation with us," but Cuba would benefit from a wider conflict or prolonged war.

The U.S. has promoted the "gross misrepresentation" that the "guerrilla leadership is seeking a full-fledged military confrontation to liquidate or dismantle all existing political and military institutions." Forces within the FDR are willing to try a Zimbabwe-style election, since they are confident they could win if it was fair, but "even the strongest supporters of this option admit that the sector of the armed forces now in control of the political process—who know the extent of mass support enjoyed by the opposition—have no intentions to allow a truly participatory electoral dynamic to develop."

The choice is clear—despotic, reactionary, violent dictatorship or democracy and reform. Reagan has chosen the former despite the information under his nose.

Spring Break

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IN THESE TIMES

Mineworkers are ready to draw the line

By Paul J. Nyden

BECKLEY, W. VA.

COAL MINERS STAGED THE first major protest against the Reagan budget proposals when they marched 7,000 strong on the White House demanding that the black lung compensation program operated by the U.S. Department of Labor remain intact. The Reagan team has suggested procedural changes in the program that would make it much more difficult for disabled miners to collect benefits (specifically, by removing the "presumption" that any man or woman who has worked 15 years in the mines is likely to be suffering from black lung rather than some other illness). The change is particularly galling to the miners since it would save money not for the federal government but for the coal companies themselves, who pay taxes into a special fund that reimburses the government for black lung benefits.

The Washington march—and simultaneous demonstrations here in the coal fields—is only one symptom of mineworkers' militant mood as they gear up for a probable strike when the present three-year contract expires at midnight March 27. Fred Decker, an organizer for UMW District 29, based in Beckley, is telling his 30,000 members to prepare for a strike action. "That way," he says, "we'll be ready if the operators send us down a rotten contract."

In a letter he sent recently to union locals and the public, Decker outlined some of the reasons miners feel they deserve a good contract this time around: "During our three-year contract about to end, average daily wages for underground miners rose by 15.4 percent. But the prices we have to pay for basic necessities, according to the Consumer Price Index [CPI], shot up 40.7 percent."

An average miner who worked 40 hours a week in 1979, the middle year of the contract, made \$18,808; but thousands of miners, especially in southern West Virginia's metallurgical coal fields, were laid off during that year or forced to work short weeks. The national median family income in 1979 was \$19,684, and the Labor Department's "modest but adequate" budget for a family of four was \$20,517—\$1,709 more than a coal miner made. And in the overwhelming majority of coal-field families, the miner is the only wage earner.

Decker's letter also attacked the emphasis the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) is putting on employment costs, which they claim "have increased over 200 percent since 1969." Over roughly the same period, Decker points out, "the price of underground coal mined in West Virginia mushroomed from \$5.46 to \$38.50 a ton"—a 605.1 percent increase.

Ownership of the coal industry has been transformed since the early 1960s, when nearly all coal was mined by independent companies, except for a few captive mines owned by the steel companies. Today, nearly the whole industry is captive to huge oil, steel, utility and mineral conglomerates. *Business Week* estimates that Big Oil's share of coal production increased from zero in 1962 to 22 percent in 1978, and will top 50 percent by 1985.

"These oil companies," Decker's letter continues, "are making the biggest profits of any companies in human history." And they are making them with fewer employees. "No company proves this more than Consolidation Coal," Decker writes. "Consol's profits have increased at the same time their production dropped. In 1970, Consol, the largest producer in West Virginia, produced 57 million tons of coal and made \$21 million. In 1979, Consol [which is owned by Continental Oil] mined only 47 million tons, on which it made \$124 million."

Miners know that this round of negoti-



ations is critical to the future of their union. Although the UMW still represents 75 percent of all miners, the National Bituminous Coal Wage Agreement covers only 45 percent of the coal now mined in the U.S. (because many of the nonunion open mines in the West can produce far more coal per worker). The coal operators think they have a chance this year to weaken the union and extract further concessions. But the 170,000 coal miners covered by the contract are equally determined to win better benefits and strengthen the union's organizing position over the next three years.

While most miners want wage increments based on the CPI, money is not the only big issue. Miners also want their union hospital cards back. Between 1946 and '78, UMW families and pensioners had complete medical and hospital coverage provided directly by the UMW Health and Retirement Fund, jointly administered by union and company representatives. The 1978 contract dismantled this system, and turned medical coverage for working miners over to private insurance carriers. Now miners must wait 90 to 120 days for reimbursements, and they want to go back to the old system.

Many miners are also afraid the companies will go after the pension system in this contract. Administered by the same Fund, pensions are now paid to retired miners based on the number of years they worked in the industry, no matter how many different companies they worked for. With the continual ups and downs of the coal market, tens of thousands of miners have been forced to switch companies many times during their lives, and they would get far less in pension benefits if the industry-wide plan were eliminated and payments based only on

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Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) joined UMW president Sam Church at the D.C. black lung rally March 9.

Block grants will let states off the hook

By Andrew Reschovsky

BOSTON

SINCE THE TIME OF THE NEW Deal the federal government has been expanding its role in the funding of social services. The Reagan administration wants to reverse that trend. In the budget proposals now before Congress it has proposed not only that a number of discrete social service programs be combined into single block grants to the states (while other programs are eliminated entirely) but also that the total amount of federal funding for those programs be reduced 25 percent in Fiscal 1982.

The federal contribution to states, local and public and private institutions that provide social services has climbed from \$1.9 billion in 1972 to \$6.3 billion in 1981. The money goes for a wide range of programs that assist the poor, particularly those groups such as children, the elderly and the disabled that cannot meet their own needs. Among other things, the federal government now funds physical and vocational training that allows the disabled to return to the workforce, day-care facilities that enable welfare mothers to find full-time jobs and home assistance programs that permit old people to live outside nursing homes. The aim of many of these programs is to save social service dollars by giving people the resources to work and pay taxes rather than collect welfare or to avoid the costly alternative of full-time nursing care.

To understand the full impact of the Reagan proposals, it is useful to understand why the federal government got involved in social services funding in the first place. Why haven't such programs been left to state and local governments?

The answer to this question has three parts.

First, there is the question of perspective. Most Americans regard the problem, say, of child abuse or of the special needs of the blind, the disabled, and the elderly as national problems—not as burdens that should be shouldered solely by the communities where the needy happen to reside.

Second, there is a common fear among state and local politicians that states more generous to the poor will become magnets for those who live in less generous states—and that local generosity may prompt businesses and higher-income residents to flee to states with lower tax burdens. The only way to provide adequate services, then, is to spread responsibility among all levels of government and so prevent imbalances.

Finally, there is the fact that the needy themselves are not distributed equally throughout states and localities. Those with the highest concentration of poor people cannot provide social services without placing a heavy burden on local taxpayers. Federal funding provides the mechanism for equalizing both the level of services and the tax burdens across the nation.

A necessary carrot.

Nearly half of the \$6.3 billion the federal government now spends on social services is paid out under Title XX of the Social Security Act in the form of "closed-end matching grants." Up to a specified limit, the federal government will reimburse 75 cents of each dollar a state spends on a wide array of social service programs.

The remaining portion of federal social service expenditures is divided among a number of "categorical" grant programs

that finance specific services, such as nutrition programs for the elderly, programs for run-away youth, foster care programs, rehabilitation programs for the disabled, and community action agencies.

The general purpose of matching grants is to provide state and local governments with an incentive either to initiate or to increase spending on social services. But the Reagan budget proposals will combine Title XX and all the categorical grant programs into a single block grant with no matching requirements. Local agencies will no longer be required to spend local tax revenue on social services in order to receive federal aid.

For Reagan supporters, the new arrangement has advantages beyond immediate reductions in the federal budget. (Whereas the Carter administration projected an 11 percent rise in social services spending to \$7 billion, the Reagan scheme will cut it back 25 percent to \$5.3 billion.) They also claim that consolidation of all social service funding into a single block grant will eliminate administrative complexity and reduce the bureaucratic costs associated with categorical grants. And finally, they argue that whereas categorical and matching grants impose national priorities on local politicians, block grants will restore local control over social services programs.

The switch to block grants most likely will result in a small reduction in bureaucratic costs—but at substantial costs to the poor and the needy. The federal government became involved in funding social services precisely because state and local politicians have an incentive to spend less on social services than the majority of the nation's citizens deem adequate.

The evidence from economic studies
Continued on page 22

IN SHORT

Good news, for a change

Glenn Silber, producer/director of the documentary *El Salvador: Another Vietnam?* (In These Times, Feb. 11), reports that Victor Medrano, an official of the El Salvador Human Rights Commission, has apparently been freed by the junta's national police. Medrano, who appeared in the film criticizing the government, was arrested in a nighttime raid just a few days after the documentary was first aired on PBS stations in January. "Without all the pressure from people in the U.S. who called for his release," Silber told Dave Lindorff, "Medrano would not be alive today."

925: 20 million 2 go

Working Women, a national network acting on behalf of 10,000 women office workers, joined forces this month with the 650,000-member Service Employees International Union to form a new clerical organizing group—District 925, a play on "9 to 5." The new union district has a potential membership of nearly 20 million workers, 90 percent of whom are unorganized. Working Women will also continue as an independent organization.

Prop. 13—a Laffer

AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland, among other Reagan critics, has charged that the administration's economic blueprint is based on untested and unproven theories. But one of those theories has faced a recent test—and flunked.

Arthur Laffer, the curve man, is one of the main advocates of massive tax cuts, a la California's Proposition 13, which are supposed to trigger an economic boom. Before Prop. 13 took effect on July 1, 1978, Laffer predicted that in the measure's first two years, Californians' total personal income would increase \$55 billion more than it would have without the tax cuts.

But Brookings economist Joseph Minarik has found that Californians' income actually increased only \$56 billion *all told* during those two years. If Laffer is correct in crediting \$55 million of that to Prop. 13, then without the cuts the state's personal income would have increased by just \$1 billion, or one-half of one percent. Compare that figure to incomes for the U.S. as a whole, which increased 25 percent during the same period. Either Laffer was wrong or California has been a terribly depressed state.

More urban removal

At least 2.5 million Americans—twice the government estimate—are forced to move from their homes and neighborhoods each year, according to a recent report from the Legal Services Anti-Displacement Project.

Why the discrepancy in figures? One reason, explained Chester Hartman, co-author of the study, is that "Census Bureau data don't even count the main cause of current displacement—rent increases beyond what people can pay." The report shows that "inmovers"—the mostly white, well-off, well-educated young adults who move into gentrifying neighborhoods—are causing increased racial and class tensions as the more racially and economically varied "outmovers" are forced to leave. Another new finding, that most in-movers come from other parts of the same city, belies all the talk of gentrification nourishing a "back to the city" movement.

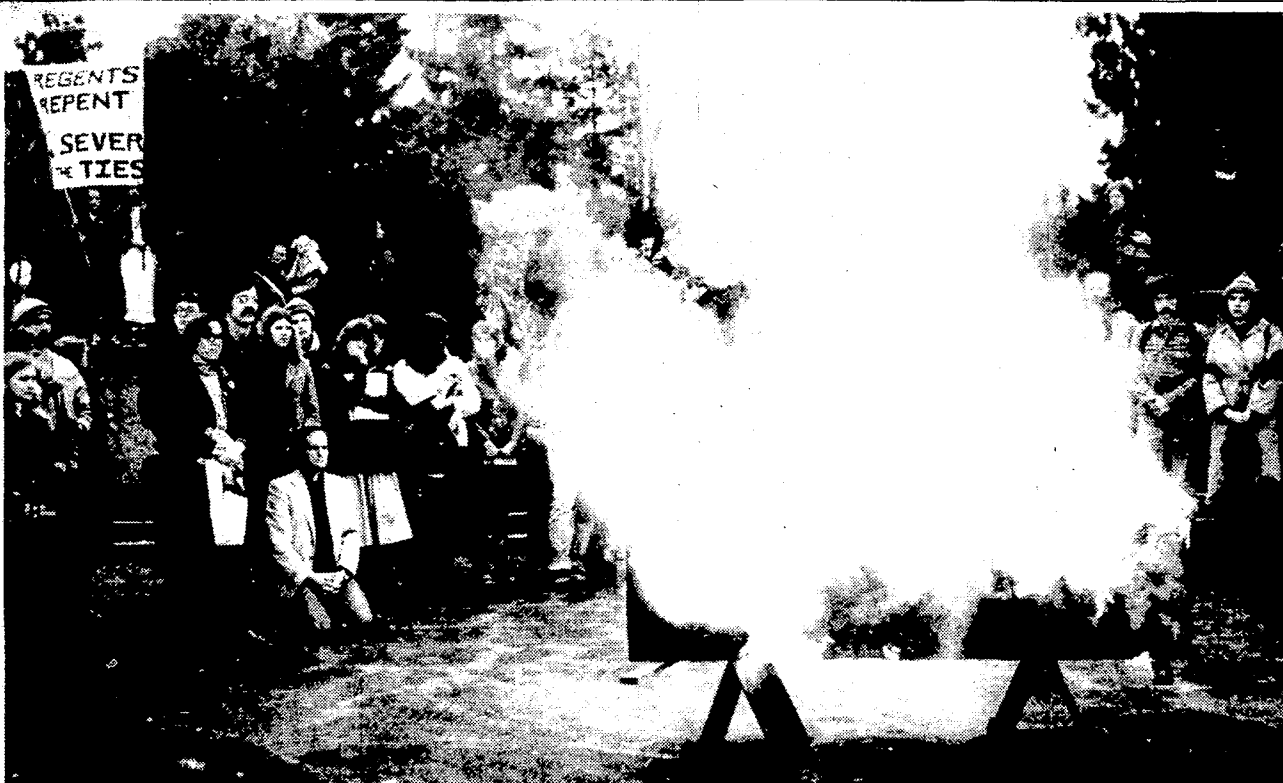
Coming actions

- On March 28, a march and rally for safe energy and full employment will be held in Harrisburg, Pa., on the second anniversary of the accident at nearby Three Mile Island. Sponsored in part by seven international unions, the Harrisburg action is an outgrowth of last fall's First National Labor Conference for Safe Energy and Full Employment. For particulars, call (717)232-0396.

- On Friday, April 4, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change will mark the 13th anniversary of King's assassination with a series of seminars in Washington on such topics as full employment and economic justice, civil liberties and human rights, international relations and world peace. Call Ray Crittenden, an aide to Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), at (202)225-5126 for details.

- Finally, on April 10-12, Detroit's Book Cadillac Hotel will be the site of a conference on "Rebuilding the Labor Movement in the '80s," sponsored by the Labor Education and Research Project's monthly newsletter, *Labor Notes*. Among those scheduled to address the assembled-union activists on the state of American labor are Crystal Lee Sutton (the "real" Norma Rae) and Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers health and safety director Tony Mazzocchi, who is expected to run for president of OCAW. Conference info: (313)883-5580.

—Josh Kornbluth



On March 4, 125 students belonging to Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union marked Ash Wednesday with a symbolic protest against the University of California's involvement in nuclear weapons research at government laboratories in Livermore, Calif. At the end of a funeral procession commemorating the past, present and future victims of nuclear devastation, the seminarians burned a black coffin on the lawn in front of the university's administrative offices and demanded that the Board of Regents "repent and sever the ties" with the laboratories, which it administers.

Palestinian still in federal prison

Twenty-year-old Palestinian Ziad Abu Eain has been held in Chicago federal prison since August 1979. Israel wants the U.S. to extradite him for trial on charges of murder, attempted murder and causing bodily harm, all of which stem from a bombing in the marketplace of Tiberias, which lies in Israeli-occupied territory. Two young boys were killed and an American woman was wounded in the bombing.

Ziad has lost about 30 pounds on a hunger strike to protest a Seventh Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision last month that took him closer to extradition, finding "probable cause to believe petitioner guilty of the crime charged."

Legal technicalities do not allow the admission of trial evidence at extradition hearings, and Ziad's attorneys were not permitted to present affidavits of 14 citizens of Ramallah who state that he was in that city, two hours from Tiberias, on the day of the bombing.

In an interview, Ziad claimed that Israel wants him extradited because they believe him to be a member of the PLO's Al Fatah branch. He and his supporters, who include former senator James Abourezk and attorney Ramsey Clark, fear he will not receive a fair trial in Israel.

Ziad's attorneys are requesting a rehearing by the entire Appeals Court and will appeal to the Supreme Court if necessary. Arab-American organizations fear that if Ziad loses his legal battle, the case could make every pro-Palestinian activist in the U.S. similarly vulnerable to extradition.

—Linda Wagner

State terror in Guatemala

NEW YORK—A group of 40 American writers, all members of the PEN Freedom to Write Committee, paced slowly in a circle in a cold morning rain in front of the Guatemalan UN mission one day late last month. They carried plac-

ards demanding information on the whereabouts of Guatemalan feminist Alaide Foppa.

Foppa, 65, and her chauffeur were kidnapped by the intelligence service of the Guatemalan Army on Dec. 19 during a trip to visit her mother; they have not been heard from since. It is assumed that she is one of 30,000 critics of the dictatorial regime who have been murdered since 1966.

The embassy would not admit a delegation of four PEN committee members—Dore Ashton, Bell Gale Chevigny, Kurt Vonnegut and Jerzy Kosinski—but did agree to let Ashton and Chevigny come in alone. They returned after speaking briefly with the chief consul and said they had learned nothing.

Foppa, founder of *fem*, Latin America's first feminist magazine, and her late husband Alfonso Solorzano had fled Guatemala for Mexico 25 years ago, when the progressive government of Jacobo Arbenz was overthrown in a CIA-sponsored coup. She did not return until this year; but the military regime that has ruled the country since 1954 apparently has a long memory.

According to a new report by Amnesty International (AI) entitled "Guatemala: A Government Program of Political Murder," even childhood membership in a defunct organization that vanished a quarter of a century ago could be a death sentence in Guatemala today.

The PEN demonstration was timed to coincide with release of the AI document. Based on interviews with escaped prisoners, former officials and a one-time military draftee who was assigned to one of the services that did the killings, the report shows that the government's claim that disappearances are the work of autonomous "death squads" is a smokescreen. For example, AI discovered that blank letterhead stationery from the various secret organizations is stocked in government facilities.

"The task of coordinating civil and military security operations in the political sphere is carried out by a specialized agency under direct supervision of President Lucas Garcia," the report states, adding that "it is this presidential agency, situated in a palace complex, which AI believes to be coordinating the government of Guatemala's exten-

sive secret and extra-legal security operations."

—Dave Lindorff

Our bodies, our deductions

It's been dubbed "The Great Flint Tax Revolt of 1981." An estimated 3,000 Flint, Mich., auto workers have refused to pay their income taxes.

In January, a 500-member right-wing group based in Pontiac called The People We A.C.T. (American Citizens Tribunal) posted handbills in Flint's auto factories explaining how workers could avoid paying their income taxes. Within a few weeks, the IRS was inundated with W-4 forms claiming up to 99 exemptions. As one local union official commented, "There's comfort in numbers."

"My labor is an equal exchange with my employer, and the IRS should start taxing only the profit," explained ACT spokesperson Bill Hughes. Income, he said, should be defined only as money earned off of wages if they're invested. ACT also argues that since corporations can deduct for maintenance of equipment, workers should be allowed to deduct for maintenance of their bodies (and thus deduct expenditures on such items as food, clothing and medical care).

In addition to its tax-cutting activism, ACT supports increased military spending and opposes government payments for abortions, Social Security and welfare. But whatever the politics of ACT and other small right-wing organizations that have since gotten into the act, Flint's tax resisters share no political ideology. "I don't think the tax revolt is conservative, unless you call people getting pissed off about high taxes conservative," said John Lukes, recording secretary of UAW Local 599.

The revolt already appears to have peaked. A beleaguered IRS, which sent letters to 1,000 of the tax protesters explaining the penalties for not paying their taxes, has since received more than 500 corrected W-4 forms. And, to set an example, the U.S. Attorney's Office has indicted two of Michigan's perennial tax resisters.

—Alex Kotlowitz

IN THE NATION

POLICY

Immigration study has no solutions

By Bill Blum and Gina Lobaco

LOS ANGELES

WRACKED BY INTERNAL discord, the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy submitted its recommendations for revising U.S. immigration policy to the Reagan administration on Feb. 27. Despite two years of research and public hearings, the 16-member commission was unable to reach a consensus on such vital questions as amnesty for undocumented aliens, creation of a national workers' identity card or establishment of European-style guest-worker programs. Though the Commission's majority report offers vague suggestions on these and other controversial topics, it offers little hope of relief for this country's four to eight million undocumented immigrants.

Established by the Carter administration in October 1978, the commission was chartered to study the question of a one-time amnesty as well as the general need to update the nation's outmoded Immigration and Nationality Act, originally passed by Congress in 1952.

Chaired by the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame University, the commission included four Cabinet secretaries, four members each from the House and Senate (including Elizabeth Holtzman and Ted Kennedy) and four "public representatives" appointed by the president. Among the recommendations adopted in the majority report were:

- *Amnesty for undocumented aliens who established residency in the U.S. before Jan. 1, 1980:* The commission failed

The commission failed to agree on the crucial issues of amnesty, ID cards, or a guest-worker program.

to agree, however, on just how long applicants must have resided here prior to the cut-off date. The report also urges that the amnesty program "should not take place until new enforcement measures for curbing [future] illegal migration have been instituted."

- *Increased expenditures for the U.S. Border Patrol, the primary law-enforcement arm of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS):* This proposal recommends increasing the number of inspectors at ports of entry, creation of a "mobile inspections task force," and the establishment of "regional border command posts."

- *Imposition of legal sanctions against employers hiring undocumented aliens after the amnesty takes effect:* The report recommends civil fines and also suggests the possibility of misdemeanor prosecutions for third-time offenders.

- *Creation of a national worker-identity system:* To help employers distinguish between legal and illegal residents,



The Cubans who arrived at this refugee center last spring have been allowed to stay. Haitians and Salvadorans have not.

the commission suggested that workers be required to present businesses with "some existing form of identification" to demonstrate lawful status. In a related and totally confusing vote, the commission endorsed adoption of a "more secure" system of worker identification in the future than those already available.

- *"Streamlining" the existing temporary worker program:* Under the current Immigration Act, employers may import foreign workers for temporary periods

in times of demonstrated labor shortages. In reaching the decision to streamline this provision, the commission rejected the idea of establishing wholesale European-style guest-worker programs.

- *A modest increase in the current level of legal immigration to bring the annual limit to 350,000:* The Immigration Act currently restricts the number of legal immigrants admitted each year to 270,000. Under both the current Act and

Continued on page 22

JUSTICE

Judge stifles Plowshares' "greater evil" defense

By Liane Ellison Norman

NORRISTOWN, PA

FOR FIVE DAYS, I SAT ABOUT 10 feet from two Mark 12-A nuclear warheads that were among some 80 exhibits entered into evidence by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in Montgomery County's Court of Common Pleas in Norristown. The Commonwealth charged Fathers Daniel Berrigan, Philip Berrigan, Carl Kabat, Sister Anne Montgomery, Elmer Maas, Molly Rush, Dean Hammer, and John Schuchardt with criminal conspiracy to commit burglary, simple assault, criminal coercion, criminal mischief and disorderly conduct. The "Plowshares Eight" admitted that acting on the Biblical prophecy that "in the last days, they shall turn their swords into plowshares," they had, on Sept. 9, 1980, entered General Electric's King-of-Prussia plant, hammered on the two warheads that sat before us, and poured blood on them and on papers they found nearby.

GE manufactures every part of the Mark 12-A warhead but the thermonuclear device and its nuclear trigger, which are installed at the Pantex plant in Amarillo, Tex. The Mark 12-A is triply mounted on Minuteman III missiles; each warhead contains the explosive power of about 30 Hiroshima bombs. The Mark 12-A will also be deployed, 10 warheads to a missile, on the planned M-X system.

District Attorney Bruce Eckle called a

variety of witnesses from GE who referred to the warheads as "material," "property," "products," "hardware," "equipment," "midsections." The defendants, representing themselves, asked repeatedly, "Do you know what it is?" "Do you know what it's for?"

"I have no idea what this equipment is used for," said Robert Cox, a security guard. "My job is security." Lynn Wilson, a tooling specialist, said, "All I know is we make hardware. We are not a nuclear facility." Richard Hauser, a toolmaker, said, "It's made to deliver nuclear devices. I have no idea about the power of it or its first-strike nature." Augustus Healy, an accountant, explained, "You have to realize, I'm in the finance department and not in the factory where they make these things."

Judge Samuel Salus (a Republican nominee to the bench despite a rating of "incompetent" from the Montgomery County Bar Association) objected to any use of the term "warhead." He also excluded any reference to the uses or destructive power of the Mark 12-A. "We are not here to discuss these weapons—if they are weapons," Salus said. "Nuclear war is not on trial here. International law is not on trial here."

But the defendants claimed their acts were justified, indeed obligated, under God's law, international law and Pennsylvania law. They cited sections of Title 18 of Pennsylvania's Consolidated Statutes, which permit "Conduct which the actor believes to be necessary to avoid

harm or evil to himself or another," where "the harm or evil sought to be avoided...is greater than that sought to be prevented by the law defining the offense charged." Such conduct may involve "the appropriation, seizure or destruction of, damage to, intrusion on or interference with property." In such an instance, "the actor need only prove that he or she entertained a reasonable belief that the act was necessary in order to justify it."

The judge, having promised the defendants that they would have a chance to present their defense, later refused to let them call their expert witnesses: Robert Aldridge (engineer for Lockheed, where he designed five generations of submarine-launched ballistic missiles before resigning), Daniel Ellsberg (student of nuclear policy), Richard Falk (Professor of International Law at Princeton University), George Wald (Nobel laureate, Professor of Biology at Harvard University), Helen Caldicott (pediatrician, president of Physicians for Social Responsibility), and Robert Jay Lifton (Professor of Psychiatry at Yale University). These witnesses were to testify to the destabilizing character of first-strike weapons like the Mark 12-A and the resulting imminence of nuclear war; to the instances of threatened use of nuclear weapons since World War II; to the responsibilities imposed by international law and the Nuremberg Tribunal on individuals; and to the biological, medical, and psychological consequences of nuclear war. Their testimony was to provide evidence that the defendants had reasonable grounds for their belief that they were acting to prevent a greater harm by committing a lesser. But the judge held that all these witnesses were irrelevant.

When defendant Daniel Berrigan took the stand, he held the courtroom spellbound. His voice rising and falling softly, Berrigan explained, "With every coward-

ly bone in my body, I wish I hadn't had to do it. Every time I'm arrested, my stomach turns over. I feel sick. I am afraid. I hate jail. I don't do well there. But I couldn't *not* do it."

But when Elmer Maas was interrupted constantly as he tried to answer the same question Berrigan had been permitted to answer without interruption, the defendants changed their strategy. Four of them absented themselves from the courtroom, joining vigilers at GE, until the judge had them brought back under bench warrant. The others remained mute, standing with their backs to the judge.

The defendants had planned to inform the jurors of the old and honorable tradition whereby juries—empaneled to represent "the conscience of the community"—have overlooked a judge's instructions. William Penn, charged with sedition, was acquitted by a jury that was imprisoned for the judge's wrath. But Judge Salus did not permit the defendants to explain this traditional right, insisting that "conscience arises from the witness stand and from the law as I give it."

Ramsey Clark, one of three advisory counsels to the defendants, told me that it ought to be possible, "under our rule of law, to handle these concepts [because] the preservation of society is the purpose of law. It can't ignore these questions."

As the D.A. made his closing remarks, three jurors struggled with tears. Several reporters speculated that they had an impulse to acquit, but could not find the grounds in the instructions they received from the Commonwealth. On March 6, after 10 days of trial and nine hours of deliberation, the jury found the Plowshares Eight not guilty of assault, coercion or disorderly conduct; guilty of conspiracy, burglary and mischief.

"And how do you find for GE?" cried out a spectator. "Guilty or not guilty?" ■ Liane Ellison Norman teaches journalism at the University of Pittsburgh.

POLITICS

Vermont's largest town elects a leftist

By Alan D. Abbey

BURLINGTON, VT

THE POOR AND DISENFRANCHISED in Vermont's largest city have something to cheer about with the surprise election of Bernard Sanders as mayor. A left political activist with a commitment to social and economic justice, Sanders toppled a five-term conservative Democratic incumbent. In the same round of voting, a Citizens Party member was elected alderman from a low-income neighborhood, increasing the impact of what is locally being called a "mini-revolution."

The 39-year-old Sanders, a Brooklyn native, built a political coalition unprecedented in rural Vermont. It included low-income working people, public housing tenants, the elderly, community organizations, college faculty and disgruntled city workers. Mayor Gordon Paquette, 64, relied on the Democratic Party organization and on the Republican and business interests with whom he has ruled unchallenged for a decade—but for the first time in his career they did not have the votes.

Paquette, who had become more and more isolated from city residents in this heavily ethnic, blue-collar town, failed to realize the depths of resentment he had created. Sanders won by a slim 22-vote victory with more than 9,200 votes cast in this city of 37,000. Two other independents won about 14 percent of the vote.

Paquette angered voters with his plans to build a four-lane highway through a city neighborhood and by his rejection of a plan to establish a mediation board for tenant complaints about soaring rents. A housing task force he had established under pressure from rent control advocates resigned in disgust near the end of the campaign, saying Paquette had ignored their plan to strike a compromise between tenants and landlords. The Sanders campaign was also critical of Paquette's plans for a waterfront condominium project with a luxury hotel and a mall of exclusive shops.

A decade ago, Sanders was one of the founders of Vermont's Liberty Union, an anti-war leftist third party. To this day its candidates win 5 to 10 percent of the vote in statewide elections. Sanders won 8 percent of the vote in at least two of his four statewide campaigns. He ran twice for U.S. Senate and twice for governor in the early 1970s. He left the Liberty Union in 1977. In 1979 he led the successful fight to air on Vermont Educational Television a documentary film he produced on Socialist leader Eugene

Debs.

This time Sanders did not campaign as a socialist, but under a banner he labeled the "Independent Coalition." When asked if he still was a socialist, he said it was a slippery term, and that the issue was not significant in the mayor's race. (Paquette did not use the term publicly in his campaign against Sanders.)

Sanders campaigned against rising property taxes for homeowners and declining police protection, but called for setting a higher property tax rate for business and commercial establishments than for low-income homeowners, who are the majority of city residents. He said police should have better pay and more of a say in the workings of their department, which has been wracked by dissension and resignations. He won the police union's endorsement late in the campaign, and many credited that as the final step he needed to gain momentum and credibility.

But Sanders' victory leaves him in a difficult position. He faces an intransigent Board of Aldermen composed of nine Democrats, mostly conservative, and three Republicans. His lone friend will be the new Citizens Party member, who defeated an entrenched Democrat opposed to the rent control plan. The city charter limits the mayor's power, even though the post is full-time, pays \$33,000 a year and Burlington does not have a city manager. For example, Sanders may have difficulty making such crucial appointments as city treasurer, because aldermanic approval is needed. And there's some question how effective he can be in the day-to-day operation of



Neither Mayor-elect Bernard Sanders nor his opponents made socialism an issue in the campaign.

the city.

The city's business, educational and medical establishment, a tight-knit group with similar objectives, is regarding Sanders warily. Despite public pronouncements of a willingness to listen and cooperate, business is unhappy that its cozy relationship with City Hall is at an end. Loose talk of undercutting and stonewalling Sanders' plans already is floating openly through the city. Acknowledging that, Sanders has offered "an olive branch," but retained the right to

crack the whip of public opinion over the heads of city powerbrokers. If aldermen do not go along with him, he has promised to pack City Hall with his supporters to press his agenda.

City residents, as surprised as the political establishment by the Sanders upset, are shaking their heads in wonderment. They were unhappy with what they had, but most clearly do not know what they will get.

Alan D. Abbey is a Burlington, Vt., journalist.

LABOR

Your tax dollars bust unions

By Gretchen Donart

NEW YORK

THE BATTLE BEING WAGED IN New York state's nursing homes and hospitals between management and health-care unions has become all-out war. Union-busting entrepreneurs have been hawking their wares to administrators, claiming that while health-care unions are on the rise, they still can be thwarted with expert help—and they have yet to be proven wrong.

Late last month, the Labor Committee of the New York State Assembly held hearings to investigate one possibly illegal aspect of the spreading anti-union offensive: the use of public Medicaid funds for union busting. According to testimony presented by officers and members of the unions involved—the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199 and the Civil Service Employees Association (an AFSCME affiliate)—nursing homes divert public money to pay for anti-union "consulting" fees, anti-union leaflets and posters, and staff wages during mandatory anti-union indoctrination sessions known as "captive-audience" meetings. And in the event of a strike, this money, which is supposed to be earmarked for patient care, goes instead for the wages, transportation and motel bills of scab labor, as well as for security guards, dogs and chainlink fences.

On Sept. 11, 1979, for example, workers at the Eden Park Nursing Home in upstate Poughkeepsie voted to strike. Earlier that year they had voted to be represented by SEIU Local 144, the largest nursing-home union in the area.

New York state nursing homes are diverting Medicaid funds from patient care to finance an assault on labor.

Wages at Eden Park were so low, Local 144 vice-president Frank Russo testified at last month's hearings, that "the employer would hand out public assistance forms along with employment applications." Yet, according to Russo, Eden Park received the same Medicaid reimbursement rate as nursing homes that paid their Local 144 workers \$100 more per week.

Eden Park made good use of the extra funds, according to further testimony. The law firm of Jackson, Lewis, Schnitzler and Krupman, hired as a management consultant, brought in 120 scabs, whom they housed in 40 motel rooms. The firm also imported Storm Security of Lexington, Ky., which arrived equipped with "dogs as big as Shetland ponies," in Russo's words.

"At Eden Park, we were very close to a contract," Russo said. "We agreed on all terms, but management refused to take the strikers back. Of course we could not agree to that."

The Eden Park strike has now stretched into one of the two longest health care strikes in the state's history. The other strike arose out of a similar situation at the Shalom Nursing Home in Mount Ver-

non, where employees went out one month after the Eden Park workers. Again, Local 144 found that it could not get management to engage in substantive bargaining, and again (a different) management retained Jackson, Lewis.

In New York City, 160 members of Local 1199 are into the third month of their strike against the Woodhull Nursing Home in Queens. There, the bullying director of the New York City Nursing Home Association, Bart Lawson, has presented management's final offer: a 5 percent wage cut, coupled with the firing of two union supporters. Lawson, who's engaged in a running battle with Local 144 over payments into benefit funds, has already busted unions (at least temporarily) at two other private health care facilities.

A high point of the state assembly hearings was the anonymous testimony of "Ms. X," a nursing supervisor at an upstate hospital. Speaking through a telephone speaker in a thin, nervous voice, Ms. X recalled a 1978 meeting of all supervisors called by the hospital administration. The administration introduced a man who they said "had experience helping hospitals identify problems that resulted in union activities," according to Ms. X.

"He was intimidating," she said. "He did not smile or make eye contact. He told us that we all had to make a commitment to the hospital, that we had a responsibility to talk to each employee about why we didn't think the union would be good for the hospital. The meeting became like brainwashing."

Though they weren't aware of it at first, Ms. X and the other supervisors at her hospital had been drafted into the front line in the statewide war against the unions.

Gretchen Donart is a New York writer.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY

One man scoops the experts



By Robert Howard

FLINT, MICH.

ON JAN. 11, 1981, THE DETROIT News announced the winners of its third annual "Michiganian of the Year" awards—11 "outstanding men and women whose accomplishments and contributions have enriched the lives of the state's 9.2 million residents."

Among the more predictable luminaries of the Great Lake State—such as Detroit Lions football star Billy Sims, Detroit's Catholic Cardinal, John Dearden, and Reagan Administration boy-wonder, David Stockman—was the name of Michael Bennett, a 37-year-old journeyman pipefitter at the General Motors Fisher Body plant on Coldwater Road in Flint, Michigan.

In 1977, Bennett became suspicious about what seemed to be an unusually high number of his fellow workers who were suffering, and dying, from cancer. So when he was elected president of the United Auto Workers Local 326 in 1978, Bennett decided to do something about it. Over the next two years, Bennett documented rates of cancer among Coldwater Road workers two and three times the normal rate in a comparable population, setting into motion a major cancer alert at the GM-Fisher Body plant. According to the Detroit News, "Bennett's work has drawn attention to the health hazards that exist in the automotive industry and paved the way for future investigations."

Bennett's findings, since confirmed by UAW health and safety professionals, the Michigan Department of Public Health, and the Sloan-Kettering Foundation (under contract to General Motors), are an important addition to the mounting evidence that occupational cancer is a serious problem in American industry in general and the automobile industry in particular. The National Cancer Institute and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health have estimated that between 20 and 38 percent of all cancer deaths are related to exposures on the job. In the auto industry alone, preliminary studies have identified abnormally high numbers of cancer-related deaths among metal workers, foundry workers, and wood model and pattern makers.

The long latency period of most cancers and the wide variety of potentially carcinogenic chemicals used in industry make both the extent of occupational cancer and its specific causes notoriously difficult to determine. But even "if only a fraction of the reports are eventually substantiated," said UAW president Douglas Fraser in an address to the American Occupational Health Conference last year, "we will face a public health problem of major dimensions."

Editor's note: This is the second of three articles by Robert Howard on workers' health and safety. Like the first piece in the series (In These Times, March 4), it profiles a successful shopfloor effort to reduce workplace hazards. A final article will assess the prospects for such rank-and-file initiatives in the Reagan years.

For this reason, the story of Michael Bennett's workplace cancer investigation is especially significant. It is a vivid example of what a local union can accomplish—even when occupational health issues are as complicated as the cancer issue is. UAW industrial hygienist Dan McLeod describes Bennett's work as a model for "barefoot epidemiology." It is an all-important first step in the Long March against cancer in the workplace.

General Motors' Coldwater Road facility is a massive, windowless, one-story building stretching over one-and-a-half million square feet and perched on 250 acres in the industrial suburbs north of Flint, Michigan. At the time of its construction in the early 1950s, the plant was one of the largest die casting and electroplating facilities in the world.

Die casting is an industrial process in which molten metal, usually zinc or aluminum, is injected into water-cooled metal dies and formed into small parts such as door hinges and handles, window crank handles, body trim and molding, and general autobody decor items. After the rough edges on these parts are ground smooth, the parts are cleaned, rinsed and then plated in solutions of copper, nickel and chrome.

While the chromates and nickel compounds used in the plating process are known human carcinogens, the specific chemical exposures at the Coldwater Road plant have never been precisely



Michael Bennett's findings were later confirmed by professional studies.

measured nor adequately studied for their carcinogenic effect. For years, workers at Coldwater Road were exposed to metal fumes and organic combustion products created when hydraulic oils and die lubricants came in contact with the hot metal used in the die casting process.

The cancer study Bennett designed for his own local is a model for other unions of "barefoot epidemiology."

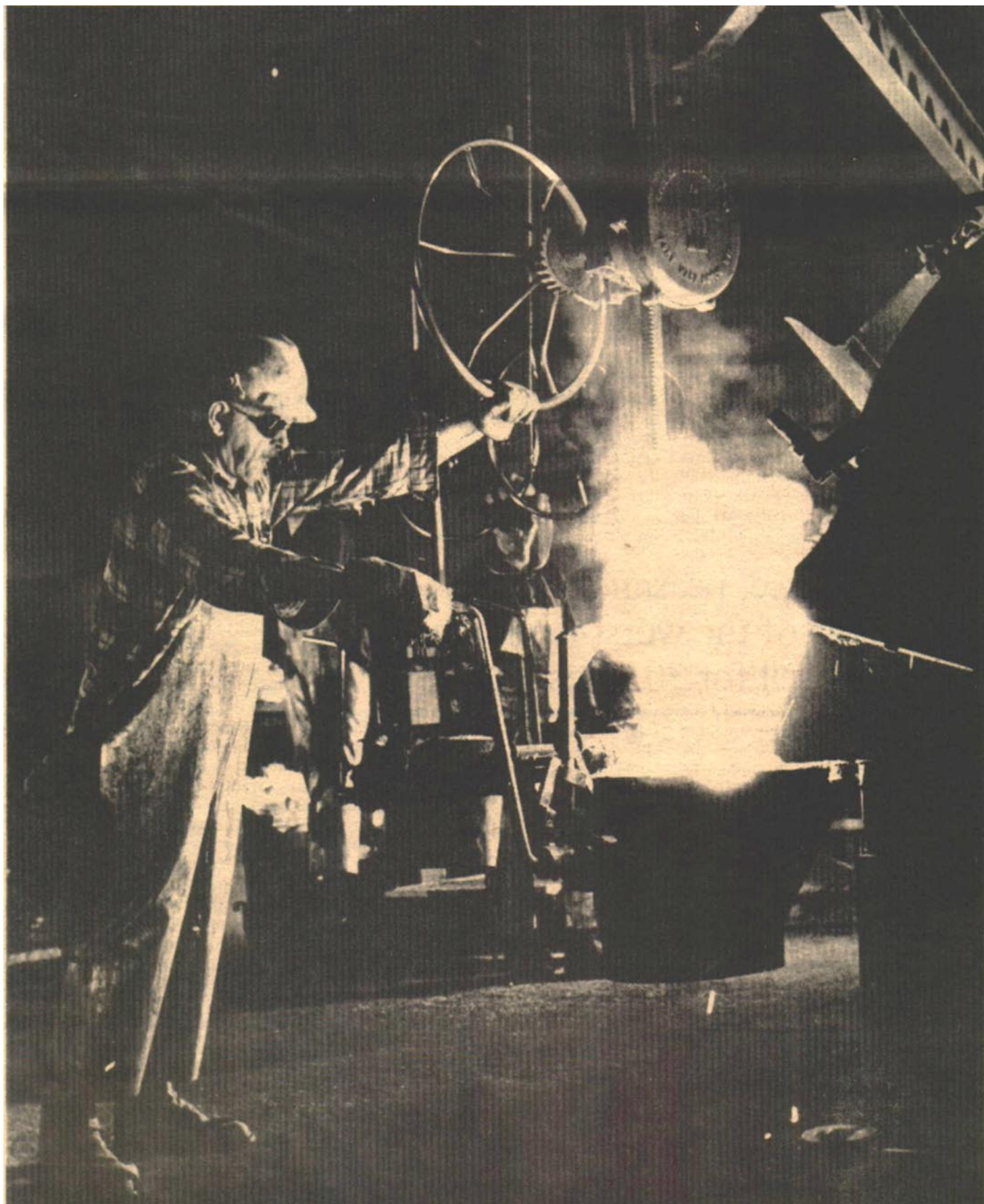
Before the Occupational Safety and Health Administration established stringent regulations for ventilation in 1971, hundreds of die casting machines used to operate without any ventilation at all. Michael Bennett, who has worked at Coldwater Road since 1964, says that sometimes by mid-afternoon the work area would fill with smoke and fumes so thick that workers could not recognize each other as little as 50 feet away.

Exposure to mists from chrome and nickel plating was also common. Fumes from hot acids and plating solutions caused shortness of breath and a choking feeling. Ventilation systems for the chrome tanks were poorly maintained. And the huge open nickel-plating tanks vented directly into the atmosphere.

Thanks to OSHA regulations and vigorous union activity to ensure their enforcement, working conditions at Coldwater Road have "dramatically improved" in the last 10 years, Bennett says. And as metal materials have increasingly been replaced by plastics, nearly 80 percent of the die casting operation at the plant has been phased out. Industrial hygiene measurements indicate that exposure to chrome has also been substantially reduced. But for the workers who worked at Coldwater Road in the '50s and '60s—and who were the subjects of Michael Bennett's study—these changes came too late.

When asked to explain how he conceived and carried out his workplace cancer in-

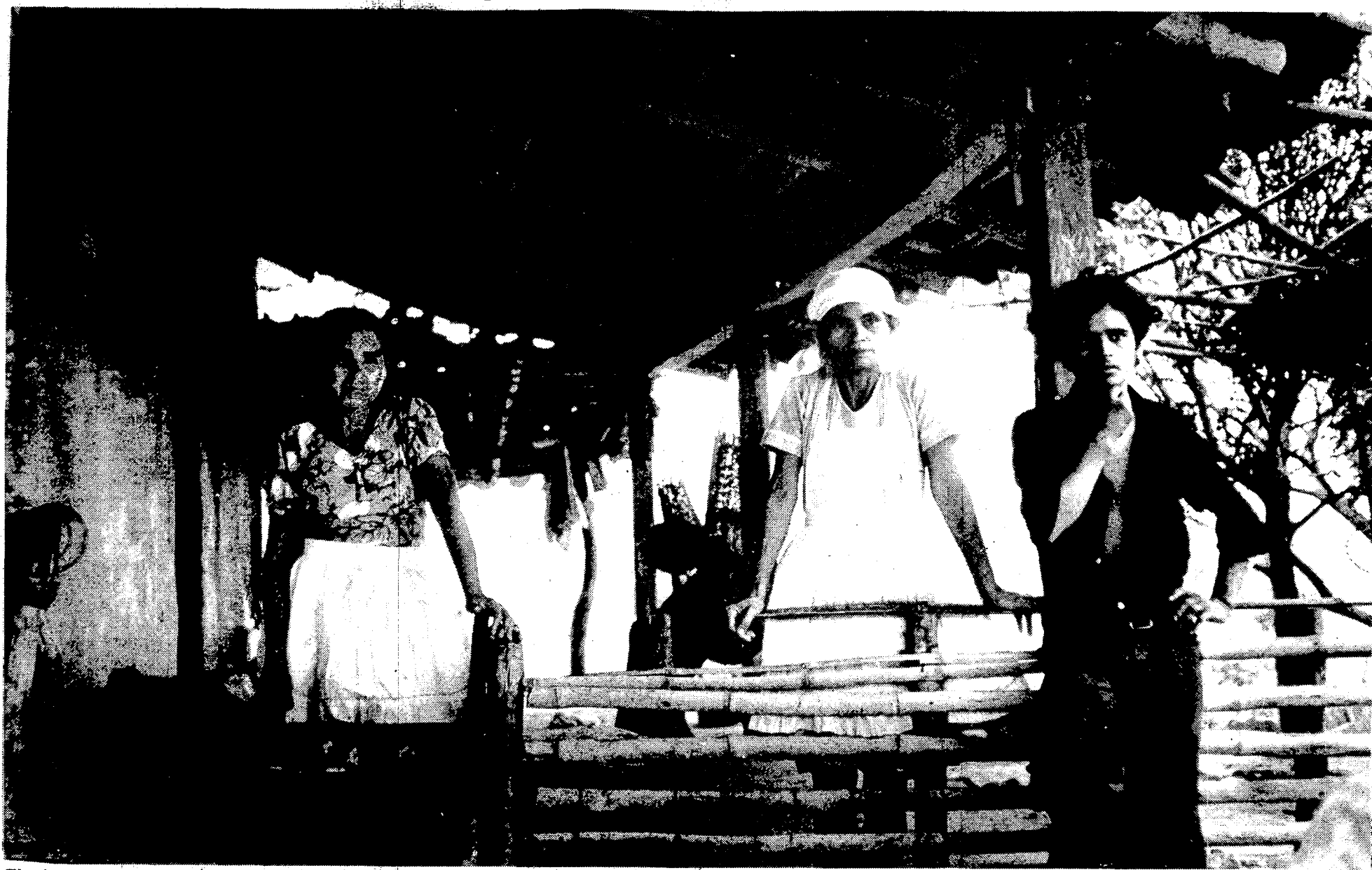
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The National Cancer Institute estimates that 20 to 38 percent of all cancer deaths are related to exposure on the job.

IN THE WORLD

CENTRAL AMERICA



David Heywood

The junta's attempts to create a loyal peasantry come at least five years too late.

El Salvador's "reform" is a shell game

By David Moberg and John Echeverri-Gent

Poor El Salvador, dominated by a coffee-plantation elite and its military allies, has clearly needed land reform for decades. But were the agrarian reforms announced by the governing junta last March a solution to the desperate problems of the 90 percent of the population making less than official subsistence standards or a genuine dem-

onstratation of the junta's commitment to reform?

In phase three, peasants get title to small plots of the worst land, which they can't sell for 30 years.

James C. Stephens Jr., a historian who had worked with peasants in Mexico, was asked by Oxfam America, an organization long involved in famine relief and economic development in the Third World, to join with its director of education and issues analysis, Laurence Simon, in a study of the El Salvador reforms during the last half of 1980. They traveled in the country, talked with government officials and interviewed exiled leaders and peasants. Their recently published report (available from 302 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. 02116) carefully demonstrates the thoroughly flawed conception and execution of the program, often drawing on U.S. government documents to support their pessimistic conclusions. In *These Times* asked Stephens to discuss his research.

Here in the U.S. land reform in El Salvador is presented as one of the strongest arguments for the legitimacy of the existing government and for the proposition

that this is in fact a moderate reform government. Is there any basis for that? The land reform actually demonstrates the antithesis, that this is not a reformist government; this is not a popular government; this is not a government that represents any type of improvement over the former government.

Except for minor participation by the *Union Comunal Salvadoreña* (UCS), the AFL-CIO-supported peasant union, there was no participation on the part of any of the other peasant groups, which for a long time had avidly sought some

peasant associations were very late in arriving. Planting was held up and some crops will probably be less than half the size they normally would be.

Furthermore, the agrarian reform was announced at precisely the moment of least demand for farm hands on the plantations and *haciendas*, so that only the smallest number of peasants were eligible.

So why did the government want to institute a policy of land reform?

If you look at the political crisis that had mushroomed inside the junta itself, you can see that in the international arena the junta had almost no credibility whatsoever; it had been denounced in one international forum after another. It also was very clear after the Jan. 22, 1980 mass demonstration put together by the Revolutionary Coordinating Council and all of the popular organizations that the junta enjoyed very little popular support. The junta needed some way to get the support of certain sectors of the peasantry, since they were involved in what was quickly becoming a full-blown guerrilla struggle between the opposition and the forces of the state.

Agrarian reform accomplished a number of things: it silenced a lot of the opposition to the junta within the U.S. government and within the Congress; it confused the international press for a long time; and it created breathing space for the junta so they could say, "We're really carrying out important reforms, give us a chance"; and it created the myth that it was a reformist, centrist government.

Did this move undermine the opposition support among the peasantry?

That was certainly one of the aims, but it probably came five or six years too late. You have to look at different regions of El Salvador. On the coastal plain along the Pacific Ocean, we're talking about very large farms that keep a skeletal

workforce on hand the entire year. During the harvest, the workforce is augmented 30 to 80 times, depending on the crops. The small year-round workforce, the people called *colonos*, who are the supposed beneficiaries of the first phase of reform, have never been allowed to organize. They weren't affiliated with the popular organizations or any political institution. They were people who were very poor, very individualistic, and intimidated by the military, the paramilitary groups and by the administrators. In other words, they were no threat to the government whatsoever.

The agrarian reform proposed by the Salvadoran government had two phases; a third phase was completely imposed on the Salvadorans by the U.S. The first phase would deal with estates 500 hectares (1,200 acres) and larger. About 50 percent of these estates either lie fallow, are used for cattle grazing, or are mountain and forest lands. The claim that El Salvador's best lands have been expropriated from the oligarchy is not borne out by the official 1971 agrarian census. The first phase affects about 15 percent of the cultivable land. It affects approximately 30 percent of the sugar can production, 40 percent of the cotton production and at most about 15 percent of the coffee production of the country.

In that phase the idea was for the military to spearhead the drive into the countryside to expropriate the *haciendas* and plantations. Then the Institute for Agrarian Transformation (ISTA) would bring together the *colonos* in a cooperative association that would start making agricultural decisions.

But cooperative decision-making does not happen overnight. Cooperatives are a product of a long educational process and democratic participation. You do not tell people who had been told they cannot organize and who never worked together in any form of collective action to form a cooperative one day and then

come back and say you have a functioning cooperative the next day. So the cooperatives are nominal rather than real. But in certain cases where cooperatives did elect more vocal members of the *colonos* as their cooperative directors, the new directors often dismissed the *hacienda's* directors, administrators and salaried employees. The fired bureaucrats would then take advantage of their ties to the security and ORDEN [an officially sanctioned, now formally dissolved, right-wing terrorist group of 30,000 to 60,000, originally started as a civic action program under the Alliance for Progress]. They would come back two or three days later with ORDEN peasants with hoods over their faces and pull out the guys who had dismissed them and kill them right there in front of all the other *colonos*. Sometimes the entire cooperative was massacred. I know there were probably more than 40 or 50 incidents of that type. It was that type of practice that caused Archbishop Oscar Romero, in the week before his assassination, to say, "Reforms that require the blood of the people are invalid." It also sparked the resignation of Jorge Villa Corte who, as vice-minister of Agriculture and Livestock, was identified with the agrarian reform effort.

In the second phase of the reform, properties ranging from 100 to 500 hectares were to be affected. Properties in that range really represent the backbone of the economy, where you find more than 70 percent of the coffee production of El Salvador, which still accounts for more than 60 percent of the country's annual foreign earnings. So far, nothing has been done on phase two, and there's no reason to think it will be. One reason is that the only base of political support that the government enjoys in the countryside comes from the owners of properties that would be affected by phase two. In addition, a number of military officers hold properties in that range. A second reason is that managing just the reforms in the 250 large estates affected by phase one has practically broken the back of the entire agricultural bureaucracy of the state. In phase two we're talking about close to 1,800 different estates.

Continued on page 10



The violence in the countryside has displaced hundreds of Salvadorans. This family is now living in a school room in Morazan.

The selling of a crisis, 1981

By William Buzenberg

WASHINGTON

FEW PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD BACK on Inauguration Day that within four short weeks the new Reagan administration would hoist the battered banner of El Salvador to the heights it now occupies in the public mind and the daily headlines.

Tiny El Salvador is now the first subject for Walter Cronkite to ask Ronald Reagan about. Secretary of State Alexander Haig even took the unusual step of briefing the entire Senate about it last week behind closed doors. It has been the subject of two jam-packed congressional hearings in the Democratic-controlled House, and it now dominates the State Department's daily noon briefings, at which—any reporter on the beat can tell you—it was hard to get in a question on that topic before.

In short, El Salvador has become a big-league issue, up there with summit meetings and budget cuts, eclipsing Iran and energy-price hikes. How and why this has happened is mostly a story of political orchestration and awakening reaction. But it is also a tale that pokes at that obscure place where policy and events converge.

Planning for Reagan's policy on El Salvador began long before his inauguration. But for practical purposes the orchestration of it started Jan. 17, a Saturday evening three days before the change-over in administrations. While most people were riveted to the unfolding hostage release, the State Department released a one-page press announcement on El Salvador. The final paragraph of that announcement mentioned that the Carter administration was immediately sending lethal military aid to the Salvadoran government—something it had not done since 1977.

The reason given for the emergency shipment of arms and ammunition, C-Rations, uniforms and six helicopters was

military necessity: the "final offensive" launched one week before by well-armed guerrilla forces. The Reagan team had been consulted about the Carter decisions—as it was glad to point out in the weeks ahead.

For those few days, then, the two administrations shared an overlapping policy on El Salvador. Thus, the early pronouncements of the Reagan State Department stressed that the new administration had decided to "abide by the commitments" of the Carter administration. And President Reagan could say, as he did March 6, speaking on El Salvador, "I inherited it."

But there were important differences in how the two administrations viewed El Salvador that cannot be masked by the inheritance claim. In the summer of 1979, the Carter administration had been faced with a difficult choice in Nicaragua—they could either stand by the late dictator Anastasio Somoza, or allow the opposition its victory. They chose the latter course. In El Salvador, the Carter policy was to *prevent* a similar choice.

Three months after the fall of Somoza, a coup by moderate military officers in El Salvador—that Washington knew of in advance—offered Carter the centrist alternative he sought. The new U.S. policy would be to back a junta of civilians and moderate military officers that would enact reforms to undercut both the appeal of the left and the power of the old oligarchy.

The policy stayed the same, but the circumstances changed. Successive juntas moved further to the right. Reforms were tried—phase one of the land reform plan, new export controls and the nationalization of the banks—but still the abuses by the Salvadoran security forces and right-wing death squads went unchallenged and unchecked.

After Carter lost the American election, Salvador's emboldened right, in the space of a little more than a month, killed six opposition leaders, four American church women, and three land reform specialists, among others. That, coupled with the coordinated offensive by a better armed left, suggested the Carter centrist and reform policy was in shambles by the time lethal military aid was resumed and Reagan took over.

Enter the Reagan administration with different ideas for El Salvador, based on a different perception of the lessons of Nicaragua. The Reagan approach to Nicaragua would have been to prevent the opposition victory by, bluntly stated, giving more bullets to Somoza. "Standing by our friends," as candidate Reagan put it several times.

The military support policy also had the happy fortune of being advocated by both the State Department and the Pentagon. As former U.S. ambassador Robert White testified before a House subcommittee, the Pentagon had been urging that at least 75 U.S. military advisors be sent to El Salvador during the final days of the Carter administration. White's comment to the subcommittee was: "I think that there is a driving need, which I don't pretend to understand, by the American military to involve themselves on the ground in Central America."

But the emerging Salvador policy was to be much more than a Pentagon pleaser. By making it a crisis, the Reagan administration could demonstrate its resolve and send hardline messages to capitals around the world.

When the administration began to sell its El Salvador policy in mid-February, some of the ground-work had already been laid. Both President Reagan and Secretary Haig had spent their first weeks in office talking tough to the Soviets about "international terrorism." All the administration really needed to do, then, was to link the Soviet Union, terrorism and El Salvador. That they did in a 180-page "white paper"—entitled "Communist Interference in El Salvador"—that was released to the public on Feb. 23.

El Salvador thus became a classic case of communist aggression, and a perfect



test case for an administration eager to be tested. "We caught them red-handed," Secretary Haig told his advisers.

The selling of the policy began privately in European and Latin American capitals, followed by private congressional briefings late last month.

The public was finally informed of the extent of the arms traffic to El Salvador in a carefully planned build-up to the delayed release of the white paper. Still there was no information about U.S. assistance. That came a week later, on March 3. Only then did the State Department finally announce plans to send \$25 million in military aid, and 20 more U.S. military training advisers.

Congressional and public questioning of the Reagan administration assistance to El Salvador really didn't begin until after the release of the white paper, and about the time of the State Department aid announcement. If there was a specific time that opposition can be said to have started, it was probably the last week in February when former ambassador White testified before Clarence Long's House appropriations subcommittee. It was there that White challenged the administration analysis that the real danger in El Salvador came from the left. White said, "The chief killer of Salvadorans is the government security forces," adding that more military aid would only strengthen the right at the expense of needed civilian control. It was also at that hearing that comparisons to Vietnam began to be made.

If there was an error in the administration's carefully timed orchestration of its policy, it may be that officials pushed the military aspects of the situation in El Salvador at exactly the time when those aspects were least important. By the time the U.S. moved to send more arms and advisers, the government in El Salvador was saying it didn't need more military aid since it had already stopped the guerrilla's final offensive. Thus, the administration was pushing a military solution at the time there was talk of a negotiated end to the fighting—and even the Socialist International backers of the opposition were suggesting mediation. Opposition, or at least concern about current policies in El Salvador may have been slow in starting, but it seems to be building now, judging by congressional statements, a planned protest for May 3, the proliferation of campus and church teach-ins, and a sampling of American and foreign press stories.

There will be further congressional hearings on the subject, but unlike the Gulf of Tonkin days, no vote is scheduled on El Salvador. So far all American assistance has been part of emergency funds or reallocated monies.

Congressional critics like Rep. Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.) have questioned possible violations of the U.S. War Powers Resolution—the administration claims it doesn't apply, since no American advisors are going into combat. Nevertheless, Ottinger has introduced a House resolution calling on the President to report to Congress under the provisions of the War Powers Act.

William Buzenberg reports on foreign affairs for National Public Radio.

Reform

Continued from page 9

Phase three is the part that you say was imposed by the U.S. What is the evidence for that?

The evidence is somewhat difficult to obtain, but Roy Prosterman is very proud of his role and he is considered the architect of phase three. It is modeled after a similar program that he tried to implement in Vietnam towards the end of the war called "Land to the Tiller." The idea is that when tenant farmers become land-owners productivity will increase: income will increase; the farmers will become consumers of industrial and consumer

per family, and there was some time when they didn't have to pay taxes, as well as a number of other incentives that made it a viable program. In El Salvador, over 80 percent of the tenant farmers rent plots smaller than two hectares (roughly five acres)—and many of those rent less than half a hectare. Working those plots provides, at most, 15 percent of their annual income, and much of the rent land is in the northern tier of the country where there is very poor soil and where you find virtually no export crops.

Phase three says that anyone who is now renting land will be given title for that land provided that it does not surpass seven hectares (about 17 acres). Seven hectares is only enough to provide subsistence for a family, and very few peasants have even that much land. The effect of reform will be that the peasants can no

peasants did not want to leave, contracts were abrogated and then the National Guard was brought in to move them out. Crops were burned. This increased the already bloated agricultural proletariat.

What percentage of the rural population is excluded from the land reform program?

This land reform program excludes the poorest of the poor, people who do not have access to the land, 60 percent of the population.

There seems to be a correlation between the implementation of the agrarian reform program and the acceleration of violence in rural El Salvador. What are the dynamics behind this relationship?

When we talk about the agrarian reform it is essential to mention that a state of seige was declared on the same day as the agrarian reform—March 6, 1980—and remains in effect. The state of seige has permitted the militarization of the entire countryside and the abolition of all civil liberties.

At the same time that phase one was carried out and military people were going to the *haciendas* and expropriating them, there were also military operations in many of the Christian-based communities in northern El Salvador. Many people in these communities were members of the various farmworker organizations and supporters of the opposition. Also, most of the guerrilla base camps are located here.

Reports from both the legal aid office of the Archbishop of San Salvador (established by the late Archbishop Romero) and Amnesty International demonstrate a quantum leap in the violence against the peasantry coinciding with the onset of the agrarian reform.

Isn't it contradictory for the government of El Salvador to have a land reform program to win the peasants over to their side and at the same time introduce repressive policies that are likely to turn them away?

The attacks in El Salvador are against organized people. They are not against the unorganized. The three major farmworker organizations are concentrated



in the north.

Isn't that where the Land to the Tiller program is centered?

Yes, the Land to the Tiller program is an attempt to win people away from the farm-worker organizations, away from the opposition, and away from collaboration with guerrilla organizations. It has tried to create a middle peasantry loyal to the junta.

Amid all the hoopla about the Land to the Tiller program, how many deeds have actually been transferred?

When we were first down in El Salvador in June we were told by the American embassy that titles would be distributed in about 10 days. When we returned in October and November we were told the same thing. It's rumored now that something like 400 titles have been distributed. Given the state of war in northern El Salvador, given the flow of refugees from the area, we must ask who are the people left in the north that are receiving titles? I would venture to guess that they are ORDEN peasants, with direct ties to the security forces.

What has been the reaction of the peasant organizations to the agrarian reforms?

The agrarian reform is not currently supported by any of the peasant organizations. Even the UCS has, for the most part, withdrawn support. From the very beginning, the other peasant organizations have opposed the program because it does not fundamentally change the power structure in rural El Salvador.

Is there anyone besides the government that supports the agrarian reform?

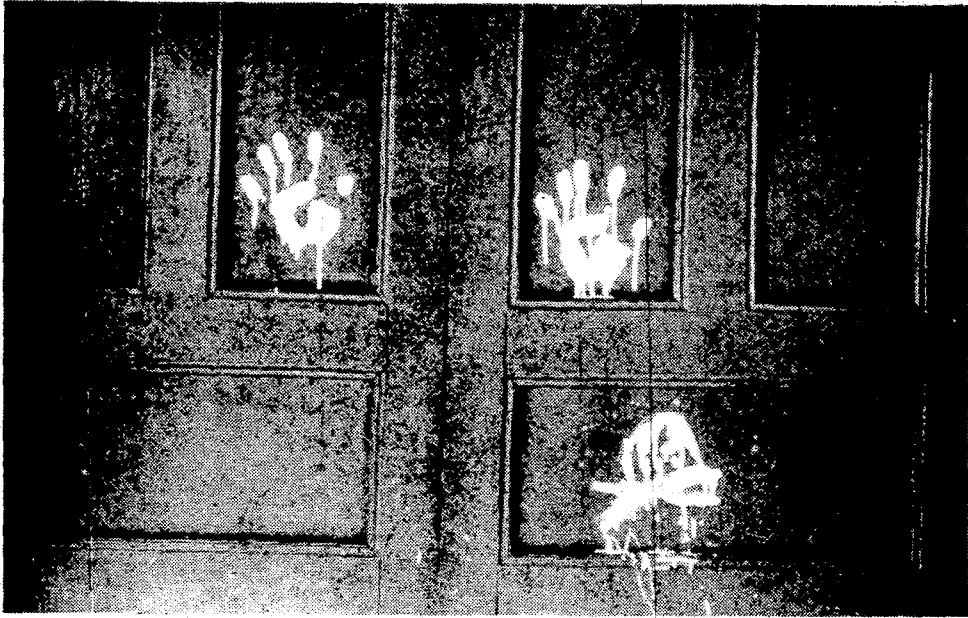
There may be some civilians who support the program because if the government gives up on it, El Salvador will receive a great deal of criticism from countries that now give it a modest degree of support, like the Christian Democratic parties in Italy, Venezuela and Costa Rica. The military does not support the agrarian reform.

But if the military does not support the reform, it is not yet ready to jettison it?

We have to put things in the proper perspective. The leader of the land reform program was assassinated. The second-in-command is in the U.S. seeking political asylum. Many of the ISTA technicians have left the *haciendas* and plantations in fear for their lives. As far as I can tell, things are in a state of chaos. People can still say that they believe in the agrarian program, but the extent to which it is being carried out is an entirely different question.

So is the agrarian program dead?

It's not dead because it still has political uses. It is a very important means for the Salvadoran government to get money from the U.S. government.



A peasant leader's house is marked for death by a right-wing hit squad.

goods; the whole internal market will begin to expand; and you will have the emergence of a real middle class. Prosterman has argued that if you multiply small private property owners like rabbits, you never have any fear of a communist takeover or any form of socialism.

This program has been compared very inappropriately to the Homestead Act in

longer rent their land or sell it. They cannot buy new land. They will be stuck on their little plots for approximately 30 years, during which they are required to pay the state for the land and the state will then use the payments to reimburse the former owners.

Landlords who hold quite a bit of land, say 50 to 100 hectares, have responded to the Land to the Tiller program by evicting tenants from the land. When the

IN THESE TIMES

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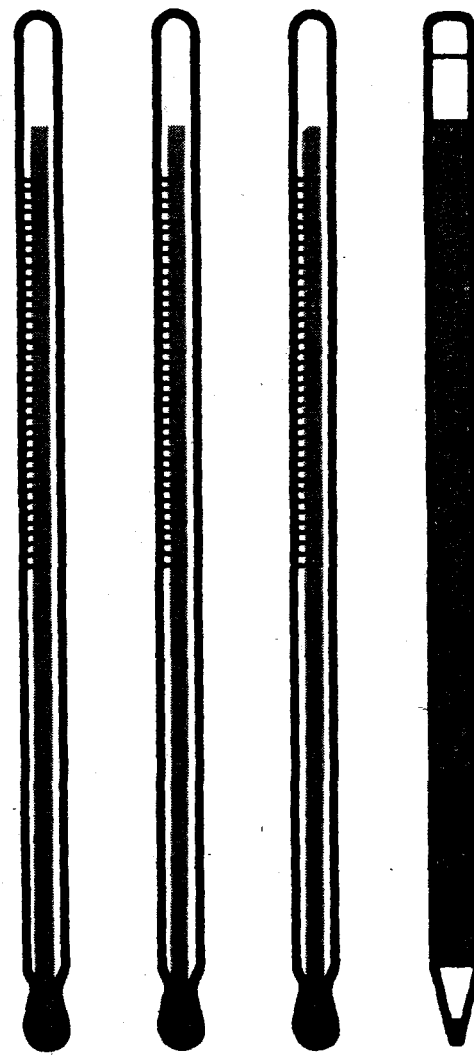
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CANADA

Bullying the boy next door

By Peter McFarlane

OTTAWA, CANADA

ON THE SURFACE, PRESIDENT Reagan's recent visit to Canada was typical of U.S.-Canadian summit diplomacy. It has long been the custom to hold get-acquainted meetings after any changes of leadership in either country. And Reagan's speech to both houses of the Canadian parliament continued a tradition begun by Franklin D. Roosevelt. The endless stream of "good friends and neighbors" epithets could have been lifted from any of a dozen similar meetings in the past.

What distinguished the Reagan-Trudeau get-together was a Gordian Knot of bilateral disputes that now face the two leaders. By far the most difficult of these involve energy issues. Topping President Reagan's agenda was concern over the national energy program announced last fall. In it, he proposed to "Canadianize" the more than 70 percent multinationally owned petroleum industry, using both public and private investment.

The new Trudeau policy requires all foreign-owned oil companies to sell off at least 60 percent of their Canadian subsidiaries to Canadian citizens or business interests. In addition, the new program mandates the state-owned Petro-Canada to speed up its purchases of foreign companies, and to expand its share of the retail gas market.

As might have been expected, the Seven Sisters cried "Rape!" More moderate spokesmen for the U.S. oil companies (which account for most of the foreign holdings in Canada) warned of "creeping socialism in Canada." The less-moderate spoke of "galloping communism." All the companies have participated in a capital strike that has seen dozens of drilling rigs shipped out of Canada and into the American West. One American oilman in Calgary even went as far as to join with the small Alabastrian secessionist movement calling for an independent western Canada.

The Washington response to the new Canadian program was delayed for a few months while power was transferred from Carter to Reagan. But when that response finally came, there was little doubt that the Reagan team was ready to support the multinational oil companies with the big stick of trade restrictions.

William Brock, the president's special trade representative, led the attack. In a news conference a few weeks ago, Brock warned that: "Americans have the right to expect free access to foreign markets if other countries expect free access to trade with the U.S."

During the private talks in Ottawa, President Reagan is believed to have warned of a serious trade retaliation if Trudeau pushed his Canadianization plan too far. There is even some speculation that Reagan's surprise withdrawal of support for the Canadian-American fisheries treaty in the Senate just days before his arrival, was linked to administration displeasure over Trudeau's energy move. Many Canadians believe that more threats of reprisal will follow.

Now that you mention it.

But President Reagan wasn't the only one to express concern about a neighbor's energy policy. Prime Minister Trudeau's lead item for the talks was concern about U.S. plans to step-up the conversion of oil-burning generators to coal. Burning more coal will drastically increase the already dangerous levels of U.S.-originated acid rain, which is killing Canadian lakes and damaging Canadian forests.

Acid rain is caused by the sulfur-dioxide and nitrogen oxide released into the atmosphere by the burning of fossil fuels, and coal is the worst culprit. An estimated 50 percent of Canadian acid rain originates in the U.S.

On this issue President Reagan was exposed to the genuine outrage of Canadians over the U.S.'s disregard for the environment. A demonstration on Parliament Hill just before Reagan's arrival was led by environmentalist critics from both the Progressive Conservative Party and New Democratic Party. And even the government's own environment minister said that he was with the demonstrators in spirit. He also expressed disappointment that the Reagan administration has failed to give any firm indication that they had even understood the scope of the problem.

One of the most sensitive issues during this visit was the "continental energy common market." The phrase, which describes an energy-sharing agreement between Mexico, the U.S., and Canada, was first introduced into the political vocabulary by Ted Kennedy in 1979 while he was campaigning for the Democratic nomination. It quickly became one of the favorite throwaways of the 1980 campaign, with Jerry Brown, President Carter, and finally Republicans like Reagan picking it up.

But in Canada the idea is looked on as a clumsy attempt by the U.S. to grab Canadian resources. There are even reports that the Canadian government asked Reagan not to mention the idea while he was in the country. Aware that the home audience was expecting it, however, the President slipped in as many references to "neighbors drawing closer together in times of need" as he dared.

Trudeau made one small concession on this point, saying that Canada would be willing to join into any discussions of regional problems with Mexico and the U.S.—a statement that loses much of its force when you consider that the Mexicans have already categorically refused to enter any such discussions.

Along with the major energy issues, there were a host of other bilateral disputes raised but left unresolved during the two-day meetings: the pollution of the Manitoba river system, the Garrison Dam project, joint oil and gas-line projects and the fisheries treaty, among others.

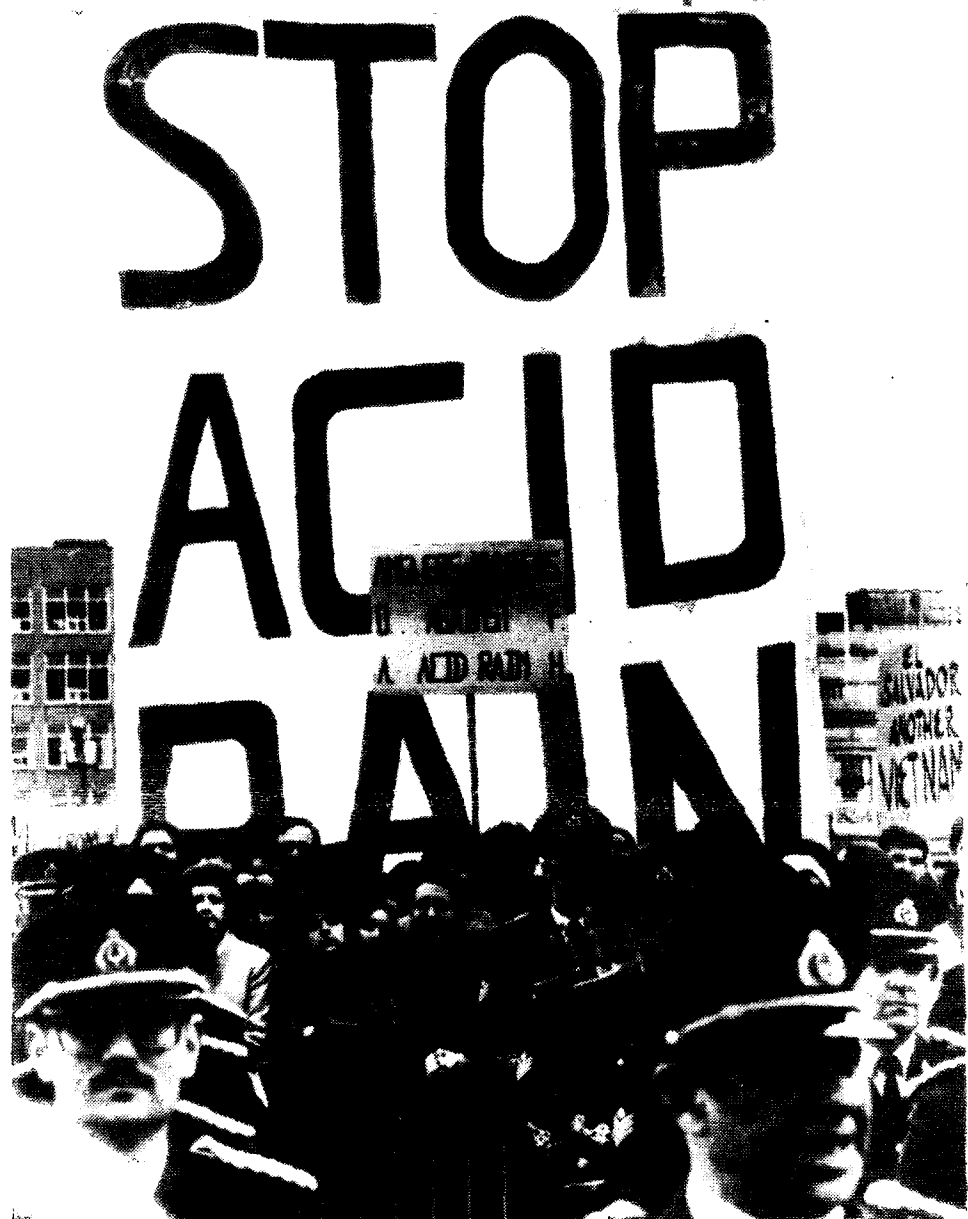
There was even one glaring foreign policy dispute. On the President's first official visit outside the U.S. he had his first taste of the growing worldwide condemnation of U.S. policy toward El Salvador. Thousands of people marched on U.S. consulates across the country, and more than 2,000 gathered on Parliament

Hill in Ottawa. The Ottawa demonstration, which included the burning of the American flag, was led by J. Edward Broadbent, leader of the New Democratic Party, who accused the Canadian government of "acquiescing in the face of the murders and in the face of the denials of democratic and human rights in El Salvador" to the aggressive U.S. policy in the region.

The fact that Canada has publicly criticized U.S. arms shipments to the country was downplayed by Prime Minister Trudeau during the talks.

When all is said and done, neither side can point to a single accomplishment of the Reagan visit. The faces of official optimism both leaders put on for the closing press conference couldn't hide the fact that all the major issues dividing the two countries remain unresolved. When, in the final minutes of the summit, a Canadian reporter asked Alexander Haig if U.S. policy had been altered or modified in any way during the two days of meetings, the secretary smiled and said: "No, not at all."

Peter McFarlane is a freelance writer in Montreal.



Demonstrators on Parliament Hill in Ottawa let Reagan know their feelings about El Salvador as well as the environment.

SPAIN

Spain's democracy is still not secure

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

AS THE EXTENT OF THE MILITARY plotting begins to emerge, the reprieve won by King Juan Carlos for Spain's democracy looks more and more fragile and temporary.

The intention to overthrow the elected parliamentary regime seems to have been an open secret shared by virtually the entire officer corps of the Spanish armed forces. A purge of anti-democratic officers is thus impossible (it would involve dismantling the armed forces, and the armed forces would not allow themselves to be dismantled), and Spain remains hostage to military men who consider normal democratic debate to be "politicians' quarrels" that undermine the unity and besmirch the honor of the nation. The restraint this imposes on the left in particular is largely responsible for the *desencado*, the disenchantment and depoliticization that leaves left leaders unprotected by mobilized mass movements.

Sources say February's putsch failed because there were too many, not too few, plotters.

This dilemma may prove tragic.

According to the newspaper *El Pais*, the Feb. 23 putsch failed not because there were too few but rather because there were too many plotters, and two different plots. The larger, more important plot had been being almost openly prepared for March 21 in the columns of the ultra-right military newspaper *El Alcazar* (the only paper allowed on some military bases) in articles signed by an anonymous group of officers using the joint pen name Almendros. The key figure in this plot was apparently the King's former tutor, the "moderate" General Alfonso Armada. Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez got wind of this plot, which explains why he suddenly resigned to make way for a more right-wing government that might be able to assuage the wrath of the

military.

To appease the ultra-right officers, Suarez's party, the Union of the Democratic Center (UCD), got rid of two key figures who had enraged Franco's men by trying to democratize the armed forces through selective promotions. Defense Minister Agustino Rodriguez Sahagun was transferred to the head of the UCD. The post of deputy premier in charge of security and defense, held by 68-year-old general Manuel Gutierrez Mellado, was simply abolished. Gutierrez Mellado distinguished himself by personally trying to bar Colonel Tejero from seizing Congress on the night of Feb. 23. He was roughed up by Guardia Civil soldiers.

Perhaps to prevent these changes from stopping the coup, a smaller group of more extremist officers around Gen. Milans del Bosch jumped the gun. The visible part of this iceberg was Col. Tejero's performance in Congress. The military also took over the national radio and television, and it took six hours for Juan Carlos to assert his authority over his generals. Apparently, the confusion over timing helped the King save democracy this time. But next time...?

Only the dying need



According to HEW figures, 28 percent of all black men in the U.S. suffer from hypertension—a major cause of kidney disease. Here a patient undergoes dialysis at Cook County Hospital in Chicago.

This is the first article in a five-part series on health care in America funded by the IN THESE TIMES Medical Investigative Fund. In future articles, Ellen Cantarow will discuss alternative health care delivery, the crisis of public hospitals, the politics of cancer and a legislative agenda for health care in the '80s.

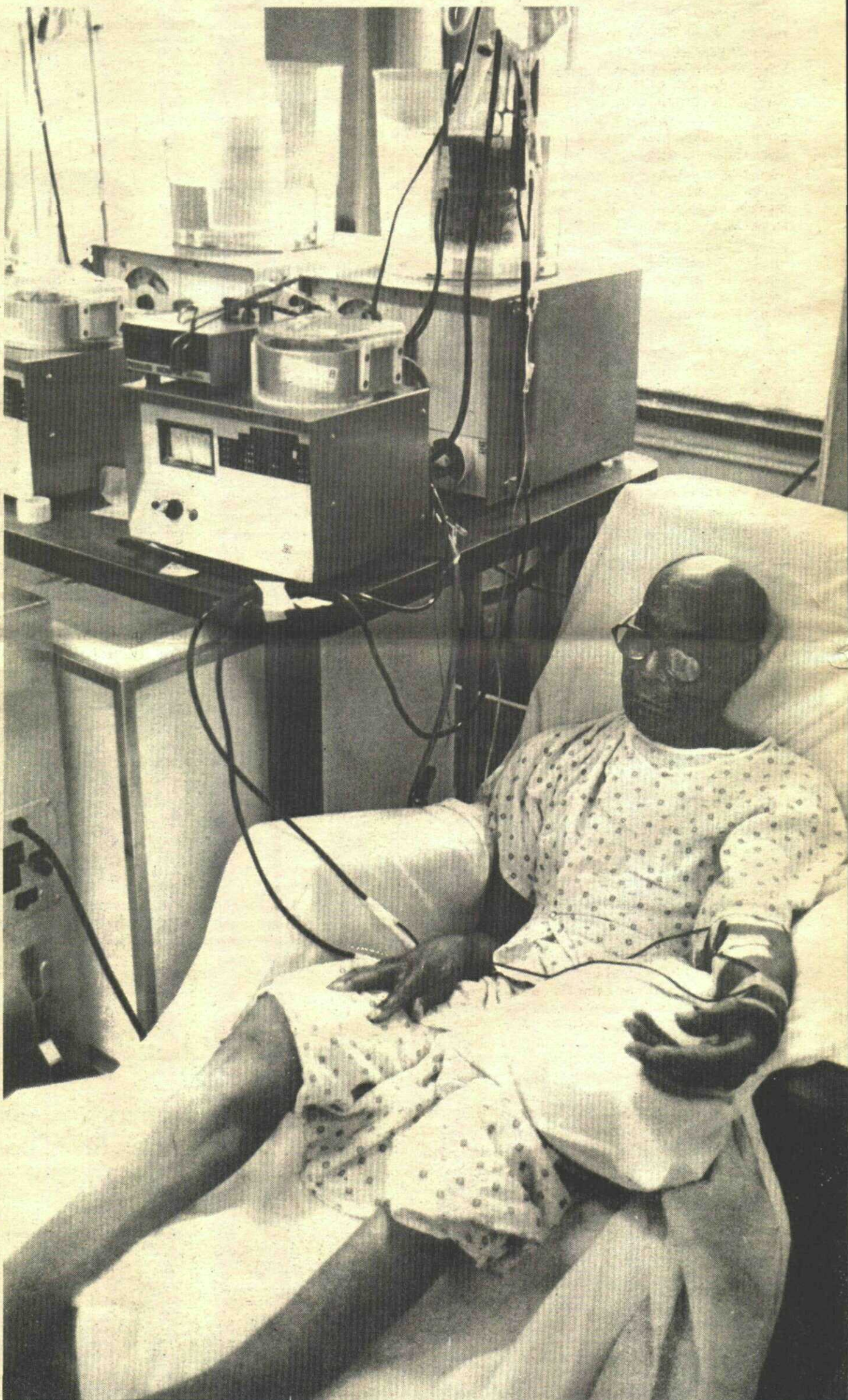
By Ellen Cantarow

THE FIRST PERSON I EVER SAW ON KIDNEY dialysis was a black man about 45 years of age. He was in a wing of a Boston clinic, lying on his back staring at the ceiling, while a machine about the size of a small automatic washer pumped all the blood from his body. I could see the blood looping up through a tube that led to a small oblong box, which the nephrologist next to me kept calling "the kidney." The blood went from there into another tube, and then back into the body on the bed.

To get my mind off this unnerving sight, I asked to see one of the "kidneys." There are several kinds, each enclosed in its box. The one that really captivated me looked like a thick hank of pale blonde hair around eight inches long—thousands of hair-width cellulose fibers, each one of which was hollow. The blood passes through these fibers, which get bathed in a fluid inside the box. The process is the simple one you learned in high school. One passage of the blood through the hank of hair and presto! the toxins diffuse out into the fluid.

At first sight there is a terrible beauty here—the simple pump-and-filter principle coupled with the filagree delicacy of engineering. But there is also terror: without his machine this man would have been dead, unless, of course, he had been in the tiny minority of kidney patients who can make it through the risky business of kidney transplantation. As it is, he is doomed to 15 years or more of dependency on a machine—three days a week, five hours a day. Some people adjust. Some get depressed. Some commit suicide.

Kidney dialysis is a little cameo of American medicine. If the most breath-taking feats of American health care are in its technological advances (rather than, say, mass public education programs about lead poisoning or prenatal nutrition), then kidney dialysis is surely among its greater successes. If American medicine is skewed to cure, rather than to prevention, kidney dialysis is at the extreme of the skew to pathology. The machine simply maintains the patient in the toils of the disease, among whose major causes are high blood pressure, chronic urinary infections, diabetes, exposure to industrial chemicals like lead, or to over-



doses of aspirin and other analgesics.

I don't know who the man I saw that morning was. Because he was in an in-patient ward at the Joslin Diabetes Clinic, rather than in an out-patient room at Boston's major "kidney center," or on dialysis at home, we know he

was an "acute care" case. (Nephrology lingo distinguishes between people who "only" have blown kidneys, and others, who also have terminal cancer, heart disease, senility, diabetes, and so on.) If he was depressed in his sinkhole of health troubles, he was no doubt wanly comforted to

*The government
billion dollars to
kidney patients—
prevent the disea*

Photographs by Steve Kagan

know he didn't have to pay the \$20,000 a year his 936 dialysis hours will cost.

But you do have to pay. In 1972 Congress passed an amendment to the Social Security Act that extended full Medicare coverage to people with kidney failure. How the Medicare bill got passed is itself a purely American tale with the usual lobbying intrigues (the major proponents were a few hungry nephrologists); some melodrama (a patient on his dialysis machine wheeled into the hearings of the House Ways and Means Committee); and perhaps some personal politicking (Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, on the Senate Finance Committee when the bill was passed, is said to have had one kidney shot out in World War II).

But more important than such parliamentary shenanigans in the annals of the artificial kidney is the chapter on money and profiteering. In the early days, beginning in 1960, when a Seattle doctor perfected the technology that made dialysis possible, the money just wasn't there to treat everyone. Doctors were forced to set up boards that selected out "ideal" patients—which usually meant young, working, and active. When the Medicare bill was passed, the blood of thousands of patients who earlier would have died—the terminally ill from cancer, the senile, the demented and retarded—began its rhythmical passage through the miracle machine. The number of dialysands shot up from some 11,000 in 1973 to 56,000 in 1979, and you picked up the one billion dollar tab.

As the pastures of battered kidney plenty ripened, the long arms of business began reaching in to reap the harvest. You'll recognize at least one of the older names—Cordis-Dow (as in Dow, the napalm maker). There are also some newer ones. National Medical Care is the most controversial. Formed in the early '70s by two nephrologists from Boston's Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, by 1980 it controlled 17 percent of the national trade in ruined kidneys, and monopolized the kidney business in Boston and Washington, D.C. A vertically-integrated corporation that both manages "kidney centers" and manufactures kidney paraphernalia, it's rich enough to have hired as its lobbyist Ronald Reagan's former campaign manager, John Sears, and in 1979 it made \$19 million in profits, according to last April's *Science* magazine.

National Medical Care is only one example of "a proprietary chain." That's health administration jargon for a company that manages space and people and leases equipment for its own profit. You may know that this sort of trafficking in human need is just one more illustration of what Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels described in 1848, explaining the need for capital's owners to "nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere." But this hoary truth is just revealing itself in the staid house of American medicine, where it's hitting hard. The thought that the grand old guild may be becoming just another sort of McDonald's—the former masters turned into mere galley slaves commanded by heartless and mindless masters—has horrified the good grey *New England Jour-*

nal of Medicine, from which cries of alarm have been issuing. At least one major editorial and several articles have writ large the ways commerce is metastasizing into the bloodstream of the high priesthood.

The business of medicine

There's a dialectic at work in all this. Some doctors have been unwitting partners in what you could call medical Taylorism—the breakdown of medicine into a bunch of component parts. Nowhere is the process clearer than in nephrology—a specialty that didn't exist before dialysis technology was perfected. In 1960 Belding Scribner, M.D., then a Seattle internist, invented the semi-permanent arm shunt. Earlier, dialysis patients had to have tubes arduously inserted into a vein or artery every time they were dialysed so the blood could be pumped out. Since a single vein or artery can take this sort of assault only once, when the patient's veins gave out, so did dialysis, and so did the patient. But Scribner's shunt, a tough sort of artificial vein, could take the punishment, and that made semi-permanent dialysis possible. It was then that the ingenious pump-and-filter machine moved from the outer rim of medicine into the hub of everyday use. Nephrology became a field. Business began blossoming in the midst of all the newly-gushing blood.

A few doctors like the men who founded National Medical Care have skirted becoming mere salaried drudges by becoming managers of other medical underlings. But there is no way for patients to avoid their own fate. One of the appalling things about the man I saw on dialysis that morning was that, like Charlie Chaplin in the famous scene in *Modern Times*, he was so caught up in the machinery that he was part of it. It was part of him. It was hard to say where one ended and

the other began, in what surely is one of the ultimate commodifications of human flesh.

All of us have to sell our minds or bodies to live, but while most of us are saleable only when we're well, the nasty twist in dialysis—and other frontiers of high-tech pathology—is that one has to be dying to be really profitable. And the entire medical bionics trade is spreading. The American Society for Artificial Internal Organs, established in 1955 by kidney enthusiasts among others, is hard at work on artificial innards including pancreases, hearts, and blood. Its annual meeting this spring, appropriately, will be in Anaheim, home of Disneyland.

Of course, the artificial-organs doctors would argue that dialysis, after all, does prolong life. And it does. It can be an unpleasant sort of existence, though. One is literally in ransom to a machine, and in dialysis there are all sorts of irksome side-effects (nausea and vomiting from falling blood pressure, leg cramps from all the shifting fluids in one's body, anemia, infections). This is not to mention the imperatives of diet—drink more than the smallest amount of liquid a day, for instance, and one risks literally drowning in the excess fluid one's ruined body can't get rid of.

Not surprisingly, the people who survive best on this regimen are the ones who would survive best anyway—the ones with meaningful work. Ed Blackwell, for instance, a drummer who has played in the past with Ornette Coleman, is on dialysis and still does plenty of gigs. There's also Peter Lundin, M.D., a New York City nephrologist, himself on dialysis. Through having to play this double role, he has become a crusader for patients' control of their own health care.

But most dialysis patients aren't like Blackwell and Lun-

din. A *New England Journal of Medicine* front-page article pointed out last month that the majority of kidney patients can't do much more than muddle through their dialytic days, and only a quarter of them work outside their homes.

A pound of cure

Perhaps kidney failure could be headed off at some pass farther up the trail to End Stage Renal Disease. This thought occurred in 1967 to members of the Public Health Service division of Health, Education and Welfare. They wrote a report to the Surgeon General recommending that "opportunities to interrupt all processes leading to renal disease be sought and pursued vigorously." But only months later another report, its principle author a nephrologist, Carl W. Gottschalk, M.D., reached the Bureau of the Budget. It recommended against prevention and for extending federal funds to cover dialysis. According to Alonzo Plough, a Boston University medical sociologist who has written widely on dialysis, the reasons the preventive program was dropped are complicated. "But to simplify," he says, "it didn't resonate well with the nephrologists, who were trying to establish the technique."

It's possible that the man I saw in Boston isn't the victim of some perverse inexorable process coming from within, but of things outside. Blacks in the U.S. suffer more hypertension than any group in the world (according to HEW figures, 28 percent of all black men have it, and 29 percent of all black women). But this epidemic doesn't owe to some bizarre genetic predisposition, since the population stocks from which North Americans come don't suffer from high blood pressure.

Sixty percent of the patients are black at National Medical Care's Kidney Center in Boston, a city with only a 10 percent black population. According to a nurse at the Kidney Center, most of its black patients have high blood pressure. It's safe to bet that they and the man I saw at the Joslin Clinic are major casualties of stress, a national epidemic that causes hypertension. The stress comes from life in wretched jobs and neighborhoods or from just living black in America. Perhaps, on the other hand, some of them are victims of low-level exposures to lead, which also causes hypertension as well as kidney damage. Not only is lead one of the country's widest-used industrial substances; its particles are also in the fumes that becloud our cities and rise each day around the joggers running along the nation's expressways.

If such major environmental factors produce the ravages of hypertension and if hypertension is a leading cause of kidney failure, then spending money on kidney dialysis, as a doctor acquaintance of mine put it recently, is "like bailing out the Titanic with a thimble—a very expensive, silver thimble, but a thimble nonetheless."

I leave you to ponder further the environmental origins of kidney failure. Nephrologists won't. Not one was willing to tell me that prevention was a thinkable option. "You can keep the disease at bay, but ultimately, it's inevitable," was the most one would concede.

If it were true that many dialysis victims had paid their lives' dues in, say, lead, it would also still be true that they were getting good coinage in return. When the Medicare act was passed in 1972 it extended to kidney dialysis patients all the benefits it gives its other disabled clients. Providing your kidneys don't work, a mere nothing from your salary—\$28 every three months—will buy you full medical coverage for everything else, from a splint to bolster a broken pinkie, to major surgery, should you need that. The Medicare End Stage Renal Disease program is the only national health insurance we've got in America.

In a future article I'll discuss "Catastrophic Health Insurance," as it's come to be called. It promises to be the Reagan administration's answer to the national health insurance riddle. Reward for catastrophe: it's just the ghoulish justice one might expect in a country that blesses us with more—though not necessarily better—medicine the sicker we are.

ELLEN CANTAROW, a columnist for the *Cambridge REAL PAPER* and author of *MOVING MOUNTAINS: WOMEN AND SOCIAL CHANGE*, is now attending the Boston University School of Public Health.

Special thanks to members of the Health Policy Advisory Center (Health/PAC).



...spent more than one
and the symptoms of acute
and almost nothing to

EDITORIAL

Vietnam was a watershed

Seizing the opportunity created by popular frustration over the taking of hostages in Iran and by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Reagan is attempting to bring back the good old days when American presidents felt free to intervene in the internal affairs of any colonial state.

In a revival of the devil theory of history, Reagan, Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Charles Percy have discovered that opposition to what they like to call "moderately authoritarian" (but pro-American) regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala—as well as everywhere else in Latin America, Africa and Asia—is the product of insidious plotting by Communists directed by Moscow or by its tools in Havana.

According to the State Department's White Paper of Feb. 23, the civil war in El Salvador is "a textbook case of indirect armed aggression by Cuba and the Soviet Union," designed to bring down the Salvadoran government and to "impose in its place a Communist regime with no popular support." This "Communist challenge," is said to be part of a "systematic, well-financed, sophisticated effort" to impose Communist regimes throughout Central America—an effort that involves "close coordination by Moscow, satellite capitals and Havana, with the cooperation of Hanoi and Managua." It is, Haig insists, a repetition of the pattern we have already seen in Angola, Ethiopia and "elsewhere." It is a threat "not just to the United States, but to the West at large."

President Reagan adds that the United States is trying to halt the "infiltration into the Americas of terrorists and outside interference and those who just aren't aiming at El Salvador, but, I think, are aiming at the whole of Central and possibly later South America and I'm sure eventually North America."

Coups are the American way.

The existence of this conspiracy justifies—even mandates—American support for any regime opposed to socialism or communism and cooperative with American interests, or so Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's new Ambassador to the United

Nations, argues. The Carter administration, by being soft-headed about the communist threat played into the enemies' hands. In Bolivia, for example, the Carter State Department stupidly opposed a coup by a military junta that prevented the inauguration of Herman Siles Zuazo after he was elected president in 1979. Siles deserved to be overthrown, despite his election, Kirkpatrick writes because he was "a man whose vice-president had strong Castroite leanings and ties." And anyway, promoting coups is part of the American way. "Even five years ago," Kirkpatrick wrote in *Commentary* (January, 1981), "the United States would have welcomed a coup that blocked a government with a significant

"Five years ago the U.S. would have welcomed a coup—15 years ago, conducted it."

Communist/Castroite component. Ten years ago the United States would have sponsored it, fifteen years ago we would have conducted it."

The Vietnam war, and popular revolution at American intervention in what turned out to be a popular war against colonialism sapped our will and allowed muddle-headed liberals to let other countries slip out of our hands. In Nicaragua, for example, our friends the Somozas faced only "a small group of Cuban-backed terrorists who periodically disturbed the peace with their violence." These foreign agents succeeded, according to Kirkpatrick, only because Carter was stupid enough to believe not only that Somoza was an autocratic tyrant but, more important, that the Sandinista movement was indigenous, widespread and growing. Thus, in Kirkpatrick's view, it was not the Sandinistas, but Carter who "brought down the Somoza regime."

The same line is now being put forward

by Reaganites in regard to El Salvador. Senator Charles Percy, for example, insists that only a tiny handful of rebels are active there, and that they are simply totalitarian agents of Cuba. Secretary Haig, while insisting that we will not "have another Vietnam," argues—as successive administrations did about Vietnam—that "the source rests outside the target area."

Vietnam by any other name.

But we are having another Vietnam, though perhaps not in the sense that large numbers of American troops are likely to

case it is clear that the movement against the military rules of El Salvador is long-term and widespread, just as it was in Vietnam.

Despite these parallels, Reagan and Haig insist that El Salvador will not be another Vietnam. They mean it (and they may be right) in the sense that the United States will not suffer a military defeat in El Salvador, and that its policy will prevail, though the latter remains to be seen. But underlying these superficial differences is a profound similarity. In the '60s Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon all saw Vietnam as a place where the United States had to take a stand, not so much against the Soviet Union—though the policy was couched in those terms—as against the erosion of the United States' position as the pre-eminent world power and against the world-wide anti-imperialist movement.

Both Reagan and Haig clearly see El Salvador in the same light. Haig's constant reiteration of the need to stop "this thing" at its source—which he defines as Cuba, acting as a Soviet agent—is his way of expressing Reagan's goal of making the United States once again the dominant world power (as it was for two decades after World War II). Thus the revi-



be sent to El Salvador. For just as we did in Vietnam, we are intervening to prevent the escape of a people from colonial oppression, and we are doing so under the guise of defending a "moderate" government from subversion by the Soviet Union. As in Vietnam, the struggle of the Salvadoran peasants against a tiny oligarchy of large landowners goes back to long before the Soviet Union existed—to 1880, when the boom in coffee growing forced peasants off their traditional lands. It is a struggle that has been viciously suppressed since 1932, when a peasant rebellion led by Farabundo Martí was put down and 32,000 peasants were slaughtered—four percent of the total population.

After decades of military rule, the Medellin Conference awakened the social conscience of the church in 1968, and priests in El Salvador began to organize "Christian society groups" and a peasant union among the rural poor. Attempts to channel popular discontent, and to effect change through the electoral process followed, but in 1972 the military voided an election won by a coalition of Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. In 1977, the military again blocked ascension to power of a moderate opposition that had won election. At that point, lacking a peaceful alternative, peasants, workers and students formed guerilla groups and began a campaign of "destabilization."

In 1979, following the October coup, Carter's State Department attempted to establish a political center between the military and the guerilla opposition. The failure of this attempt to gain control over the military led most Social Democrats and many Christian Democrats to join the opposition in the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation (FMLN). (See "Inside Story").

This history clearly has little to do with Soviet or Cuban subversion. The Cubans may well be supplying some arms to the guerillas, but the bulk of their supplies come from purchases on the black market (*JTT*, March 4, 1981). And in any


val of talk about "rolling back Communism," and the re-emergence of the view that the Soviet Union and Cuba have the devilish power to foment discontent and rebellion (called terrorism by Haig) in otherwise peaceful nations throughout the Third World.

But it is too late to bring back the bipolar world in which capitalism, led by the United States, prevails over monolithic Communism, led by the Soviet Union. Capitalism could be dominant only temporarily because of the destruction of Germany and Japan and the exhaustion of our allies in the World War. Communism, which was politically monolithic until after Stalin's death in 1953, has now revealed itself to be almost as diverse as the capitalist world.

And Vietnam was a watershed. The American defeat there signalled the end of imperialist invincibility and symbolized the end of American world domination. That process, as contrasted to communism in any one nation, is irreversible. The Reagan administration cannot stop it even if it can defeat the people of El Salvador. And if it continues the policy now embarked upon it very well may blow up the world trying.

How far Reagan will be able to go along this mad path depends on the American people. So far the returns are inconclusive, but not all discouraging. Opposition to military aid to El Salvador starts out at a much higher level than the opposition to the Vietnam war in the early years of direct American intervention. It is already more widespread, especially within the Catholic church, in Congress and even in parts of the labor movement. And teach-ins are beginning to show promise of the revival of a student movement.

The American people have nothing to gain and everything to lose in pursuit of Reagan's attempts to bring back the past abroad as well as at home. And, if the lesson of Vietnam has been as widely learned as we believe it has, we may finally see the emergence of an effective new left in this decade.



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Gloria Steinem
Ms. magazine

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LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

REAGAN'S TAXES

DAVID MOBERG'S "REAGAN OPENS with Big Tax Increase" (ITT, Feb. 11) gets burdened in arguments offered by "experts"—decontrol, supply side rationale, old oil, new oil. He plays and kneads their explanations diligently, making the unfair distribution point obvious. The tax rebate pot boils over for corporations in general but Moberg ends up stewing in the narrowness of oil companies like some bureaucrat in ideological reverse.

Consequently he makes only four or five good hard damning points against oil industry profits, but makes no connection with those and the emerging tax policy of Ronald Reagan, which was what the article began explaining.

This issue of ITT happened to be in my mail box the same day *The Machinist* arrived. Addressing the Reagan tax issue as well, it had more than a dozen damning statistics in about the same amount of space. It took the same departure point on Reagan, but headed in an opposite direction: toward the Robin Hood-in-reverse tax structure that Reagan has at his disposal to further enrich 1,300 largest American corporations. Eighty percent of the benefit from what is called the "10-5-3 tax cut program" would go to those corporations and amount to \$57.7 billion a year, compared to Moberg's \$3-4 billion lost in oil company revenues.

Patrick J. Ziska in *The Machinist* points out that Reagan is simply stretching existing loopholes and will provide a \$600 billion leak in revenues over 10 years. In 1944, corporate taxes amounted to 34 percent of all federal revenues. Today that share has dwindled to 12.9 percent, while corporate profits obviously have increased over that period.

—Jacob Arndt
Minneapolis, Minn.

UNION WEAKNESS

THE CANDOR OF YOUR STORY ON THE Caucus of Congressional Aides (ITT, Feb. 4) was revealing. I was especially puzzled by the surprise of the AFL-CIO legislative department director over the lack of support unionized workers gave union-endorsed candidates. At least four years ago a Vermont state union officer told me that unions could not deliver votes for candidates in Vermont. Perhaps this is because there is little organized labor here.

As a union member, I sense another explanation for this non-support. To bargain with an authoritarian structure of management, unions have created authoritarian structures. These may be useful for bargaining and strikes but the authority is disregarded when it tries to exert power in non-union issues.

It is not always clear how well unions are organized. Locally, after several months out on strike with stalled negotiations, a group of 35 union members threatening to cross the picket line was enough to have a 200-member union stop the strike and take what they could get.

—Robert W. Santlory
Bennington, Vermont

STICKING AROUND

WHILE SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL'S THESIS is that the left must learn politics (ITT, Feb. 18) is easy to agree with, his criticisms of the Citizens Party are not. If the left is to learn, it must seek the root

causes of our problems. Pointing out that "the official Reagan/Carter campaigns spent less for each vote they gained" is like pointing out that the Rockefeller family spends less percentage of its income on food than does the average welfare family. Brilliant.

He neglects to mention that almost one-third of the total Citizens Party budget was spent on ballot access, not on the campaign.

Blumenthal indulges in the kind of circular reasoning the left should change, not perpetuate. To claim that media attention was not a real problem since Commoner had no base of popular support, is to make the establishment argument that since nobody ever heard of the party, it deserves no attention from the media. He refers to the "dramatic gesture" of the radio ad and chides us because our candidate "tastefully denigrates himself to the depths of barroom banter." Would that left critics would refrain from obscure allusions (what/who is "Richard Wirthlin's polling firm"?), and begin spending time in America, they might find barroom banter at a much higher level than campaign rhetoric. And we might begin to provide remedies along with our diagnosis.

We in the Citizens Party have made enough mistakes to fill a book. We are trying to learn from our mistakes and grow in the process. Constructive criticism from the left is not only necessary, but desired. Better luck next time, to both Blumenthal and the American left. Rest assured, we will be around next time.

—Frank Scott
Berkeley, Calif.

MARSHALL FUND

IN HIS RECENT LETTER (ITT, FEB. 4) DAVID Noble made a number of inaccurate statements about the German Marshall Fund of the United States. This is particularly surprising as Noble has also been a grantee of the Fund, a fact he failed to mention in his letter.

The past chair, William M. Roth, is not a "top official of...Matson Navigation." Neither Robert Gerald Livingston nor I "serve as consultants to the Trilateral Commission."

C. Douglas Dillon, W. Averell Harriman, Gabriel Hauge, John J. McCloy, James A. Perkins and David Rockefeller have an honorary relationship to the fund because of their association with the Marshall Plan. They are not involved in the Fund's administration.

—Peter R. Weitz
Program Coordinator, The German Marshall Fund of the United States
Washington, D.C.

NOT FOR SALE

HARD AS GEOFFREY STOKES TRIES (ITT, Feb. 18), his evidence simply does not uphold the sinister thesis that my *Fortune* article on the anti-corporate axe-grinders of the Nestle boycott was a "textbook example of corporate influence on the media." Did Nestle inspire the story idea? No, he admits. Did it have anything to do with getting Dr. Ernest Lefever's Ethics and Public Policy Center interested in the subject? No, in fact, "Nestle hadn't even heard of EPPC until Nickel began interviewing corporate officers for his study." Was there any Nestle funding of EPPC at the time Lefever asked me to undertake a study? No again.

Moreover, as Stokes chose to withhold from his readers, my contract

with the Center hinges on the unequivocal condition that no funding whatever shall come from the infant formula industry. (So much for the nasty slur that the "prospect of a significant fee" led me to a "suspension of cynicism" about the Center's funding.) Stokes' convoluted theory that I can only get my full fee for my study if it passes muster with the industry representative on the three-member manuscript review panel is nonsense. My contract spells out clearly that I am free to reach whatever conclusions I believe are warranted by the evidence.

To be sure, that evidence makes most of the zealous claims of the Nestle boycotters look rather ridiculous. Perhaps this explains why the Nestle boycott movement, on whose press releases Stokes relies, finds it easier to impugn their critics' integrity than to deal with them on the merits of the case. Anyone silly enough to believe that *Fortune*—or I—are for sale obviously has not tried.

—Herman Nickel
Washington, D.C.

GETTING IT STRAIGHT

I WANT PERSONALLY TO THANK SECRETARY of State Alexander Haig for clarifying for me the situation in Central America.

Let's see if I got this straight: it appears that Fidel Castro, the PLO, the Rumanians and some little red men from the planet Uranus are sending arms to the rebels in El Salvador as part of a plot to spread the evil of godless and atheistic communism to the back porch of the United States of America. This, of course, we must resist.

So, to prevent the spread of communism in our hemisphere, we support a dictatorship that defends the sacred values of Western civilization and democracy by killing a Salvadoran archbishop and four American nuns, plus labor leaders, university students, working people, *campesinos*, housewives and anyone else that stands in the way of their Crusade for Freedom.

It is this monumental stupidity of American policy that makes communism a self-fulfilling prophecy. When will we ever learn?

—Art Liebrez
Corte Madera, Calif.

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

IN THE INTEREST OF HISTORICAL ACCURACY you ought to note a correction in the statement by Nell Painter (ITT, March 4) referring to A. Philip Randolph and the National Negro Congress. Noting that Randolph, "as president of the National Negro Congress, ...criticized the Soviet Union in a speech" at the 1940 Congress, Painter adds: "The Congress voted him out of office and elected a former YMCA leader who was closer to Communist Party policies." Actually, Randolph criticized both the stand taken by the National Negro Congress to affiliate with the CIO's Labor Non-Partisan League and the Soviet Union, and he resigned as NNC president. Moreover, this was not the only organization Randolph resigned from in 1940. That same year he had resigned—albeit briefly—from the Socialist Party because he could not go along with its opposition to the war in Europe as an imperialist war.

—Philip S. Foner
Camden, N.J.

A STEP TOO FAR

I BELIEVE IN POETIC LICENSE, BUT whoever said that the rest of the Almanac Singers "cowered" before Woody Guthrie (Ronald Radosh's review of Klein's bio, ITT, Feb. 4) deserves a good kick in the typewriter. We argued, disagreed and variously deferred to each other's highly various experience. I don't remember anyone cowering, not once. And we ended up writing some good songs in the brief career of the group.

—Pete Seeger
Beacon, N.Y.

SOLIDARITY WITH SOLIDARITY

AS AMERICAN LEFTISTS WE ARE greatly disturbed by the increasingly harsh campaign against dissidents in the K.O.R. (Polish initials of the Workers Defense Committee/Committee for Social Self Defense), supporters of Poland's Solidarity movement. In particular we are concerned about the attack on one of the group's leading spokesmen, Jacek Kuron.

Playing on the fear of a Russian invasion, the conservative leadership in Poland is calling for the expulsion of these dissidents from Solidarity. As American dissidents we are familiar with the pattern in which a militant minority is attacked as a first step in an attempt to divide and defeat a movement that is too strong to be taken on directly. As opponents of American interventionist foreign policy we are especially concerned that a defeat of the Polish workers' movement by the Polish government, by the Russians, or by both working together, with strengthen the hand of the advocates of American military interventionism.

The open support of dictatorship by the Reagan-Haig administration and the cynical dropping of even the slogan of "human rights" is made easier because it is echoed in the Warsaw Pact bloc. If Polish democrats, progressives and workers can be brought back into line by the threat of outside intervention it will encourage the U.S. government's attempts to do the same in its "sphere of influence." Therefore, we view the defense of the Solidarity movement, and of its K.O.R. supporters, as an integral part of resistance to militarist interventionism by the U.S. government as well.

—Barry Commoner, Hal Draper, Kate Ellis, Barbara Garson, Allen Ginsberg, Michael Harrington, Joanne Landy, David McReynolds, Seymour Melman, Harley Shaiken, I.F. Stone, William K. Tabb

STONE'S SOCIALISM

IN SARAH CARDIN'S INTERVIEW (ITT, Feb. 25) I.F. Stone referred to the Soviet Union as a "socialist" country. Apparently, like a lot of other people, he doesn't know what socialism is.

Funk and Wagnall's *Standard College Dictionary* defines socialism as "Public collective ownership or control of the basic means of production, distribution, and exchange, with the avowed aim of operating for use rather than for profit, and of assuring to each member of society an equitable share of goods, services and welfare benefits."

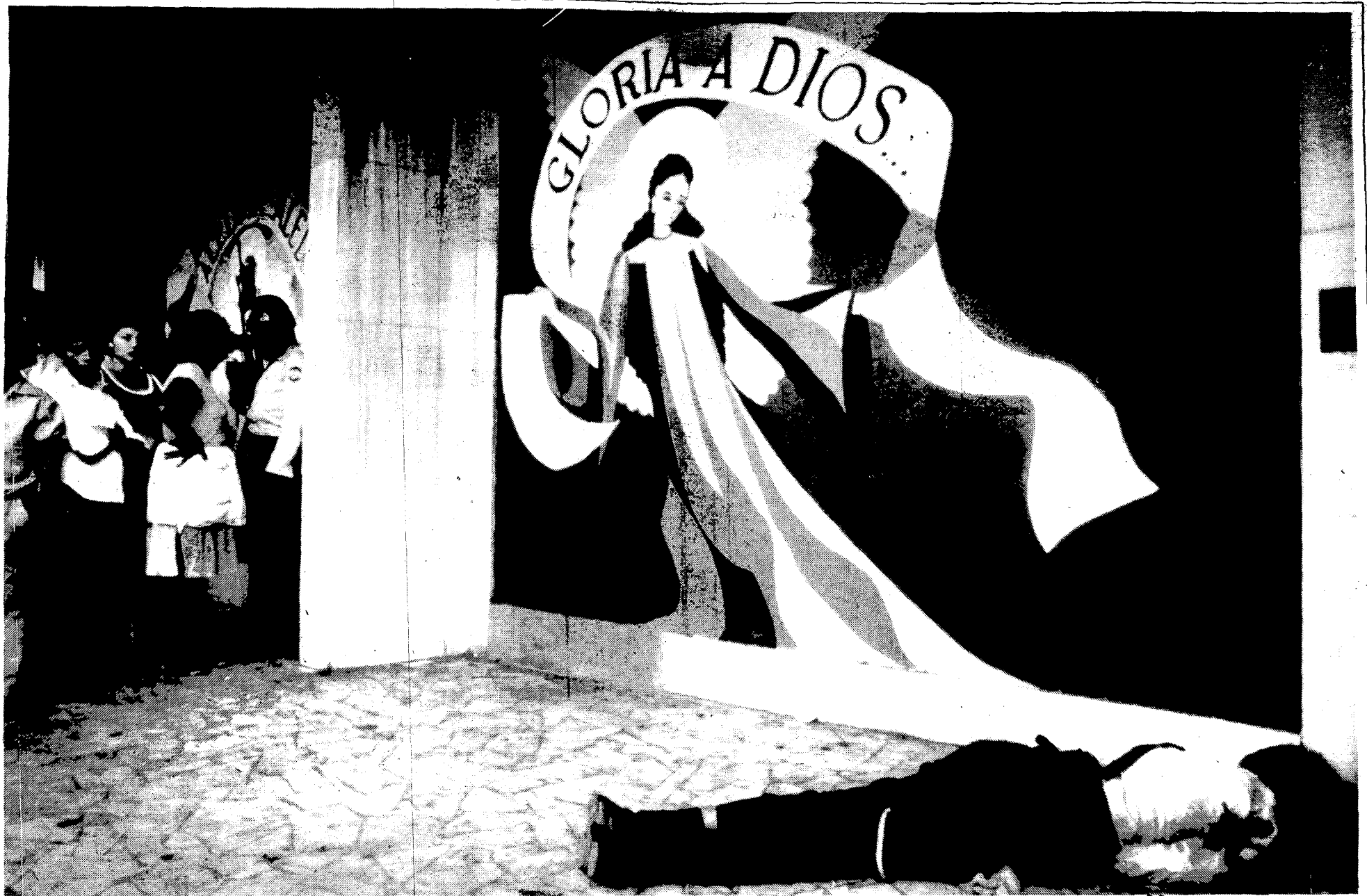
The Soviet public doesn't have "control of the basic means of production, distribution and exchange," nor do they own those means, *because* they don't control them. Let's use an analogy. Suppose you "own" a TV set, but you don't control it; I'm going to tell you what to watch and when to watch it, and if I want to turn it off I can do that too. Clearly you don't really own that TV set, and likewise the Russians can't honestly be said to own their means of production, distribution and exchange.

This serves to point up a largely ignored fact: socialism, by its very definition, can exist only in a democracy. (How else will there be public collective control?)

Maybe Stone used the term "socialist" for lack of a better one. Well, I don't know what to call the Soviet economy either, but if we want to create a popular socialist movement, we've got to stop calling non-democratic countries "socialist."

—Chuck Cares
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.



John Hoagland

PERSPECTIVES

Christians choose sides on El Salvador

By Renny Golden

ON JAN. 1, 1981, 10 MAJOR Catholic institutions in El Salvador announced their support and participation in the people's insurrection in the following official communique: "At this time the Salvadoran people are preparing for an insurrection as the last means to obtain the justice and peace they have often been denied. As Christians, religious and priests engaged in pastoral, educational and social work, we too wish to be with the people at this moment, recognizing the justice of their cause and struggle and their legitimate right to insurrection." Nine days later, on Jan. 10, the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN) initiated the first offensive of the liberation struggle.

In El Salvador, Christians choose sides. This choosing the poor and the oppressed is a political act that has cost the lives of 13,000 Christians, hundreds of catechists and layworkers, 12 Salvadoran priests, Bishop Romero and four North American missionary women. The martyred new church embodied among the poor exposes a complacent old church that, through "neutrality," supports the rich, the rulers. Bishop Rivera y Damas is the only Salvadoran bishop who sides with the poor's cause. The rest of the Salvadoran bishops maintain the status quo by supporting a government junta responsible for the killings of 50 peasants a day. One bishop even called upon the people to arm themselves against the left. Wall signs painted throughout El Salvador are unambiguous about the threat. The signs read: "Be a patriot, shoot a priest."

Archbishop Romero is one priest who was shot by a "patriot." Romero still re-

mains, however, a danger to the junta. The anniversary of his death, on March 24, is expected to be a rallying point for the people. His trust in the poor was a belief in their historical destiny to liberate themselves. The resistance of Romero's catechists, many of whom were murdered and mutilated, led him inexorably to their side.

The danger of Romero to the ruling junta was not only his denunciation of the rich oligarchy and the Christian Democratic Party, and not only his demand that Carter cease military aid or even his final political/pastoral act commanding the soldiers, in God's name, to cease the killing. But it was also his recognition of the peoples' fundamental right to organize themselves to fight back that threatened the junta. In Romero's own words, "When all peaceful means are blocked, the Church deems insurrection a morally just option."

It took the death of Archbishop Romero to alert the North American Church to its responsibility to demand that the U.S. State Department cease aid. Only weeks before his death, Romero sent a letter to Carter asking him to "guarantee that your government will not intervene directly or indirectly with military, economic, diplomatic or other pressure to determine the destiny of the Salvadoran people."

Since that plea \$35 million in aid and 25 military advisors have been sent to El Salvador. The amount of aid sent in the last year is 83 percent greater than all the aid sent in the last 50 years. State Department officials would not confirm (as yet) plans to send \$300 million in economic aid to shore-up the agrarian reform program. The \$25 million in military aid underscores Reagan's policy toward Central America—Salvador will not become another Nicaragua. The connection our State Department makes between these

two countries is expressed in the withholding of promised reconstruction aid to Nicaragua as punishment for alleged shipments of arms from Cuba through Nicaragua to El Salvador. These allegations have been denied by members of the Church in Nicaragua, such as Maryknoll priest Miguel D'Escoto, Nicaragua's Minister of Foreign Affairs. D'Escoto has stated that his country has a policy of "non-intervention in El Salvador." But as Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomas Borge has stated: "You have to consider the great sympathy there is here for the Salvadoran people.... If we jailed all the sympathizers of the Salvadoran people, [those who might smuggle arms], we would have a million and a half prisoners."

Nevertheless, State Department "arms supply" accusations against Nicaragua (as well as a host of other countries) have justified increased U.S. involvement in El Salvador. State Department "evidence" of Russian arms shipments through Nicaragua or Cuba has the effect of declaring that Central American or Caribbean countries' movement toward self-determination, is Russian-orchestrated.

In an interview days before her assassination, Sr. Ita Ford commented: "I think sometime the U.S. has to realize that it does not own Central America or any other part of the world. People have the right to shape their own destinies and choose the type of government they want...and we don't lose anything. We don't lose Cuba, we don't lose Nicaragua because they were never ours to lose."

Ita Ford's last reflections in the wake of the State Department's burial of an official investigation into the rape/torture/murders of the four missionary women denounced State Department aid to El Salvador: "I am outraged at the American support because I think the U.S. is upholding a myth that there is a center ground, and I think it's just a creation of hopes of the State Department." Her condemnation joins the judgment of countless Salvadorans who've paid with their lives the social costs of U.S. backing of the junta.

In the same week that "proof" of Sr. Ita Ford's indictment of the junta-backed army was documented by a congressional delegation to El Salvador, State Department "proof" of Russian arms shipment was announced. The State Department announcement anticipated the Studds Bill introduction into the House for the purpose of stopping military aid to El Salva-

dor. The congressional delegation (Studds, Mikulski and Edgar) report states that "the army of El Salvador is waging a systematic campaign of terrorism against villagers including women and children." The delegation's report concurs with the Salvadoran Church's claim that the junta is responsible for the persecution of the peasants. Archbishop Rivera y Damas has officially declared that: "Although those directly responsible for the persecution try to hide their guilt denouncing the violence simply as a battle between the far left and the far right, it has become evident that the majority of the persecution of the Church has been carried out by Security Forces and paramilitary organizations.... We hold the government responsible."

The atrocities for which the Salvadoran government is responsible were documented in February 1981 at a Peoples' Tribunal in Mexico. A primary focus of the testimonies was the massacre at Rio Sumpul, on the Honduran border, when 600, mostly women, children and elderly refugees were attacked by both armies. The massacre was characterized by the same rape/murder/mutilation pattern of repression perpetrated against the peasant population daily in El Salvador. An added horror, according to Sr. Ita Ford, was the throwing of children into the river; in some cases soldiers threw children into the air and shot at them.

The effort to stop the murder of the people, to liberate El Salvador from such vicious oppression, has moved beyond resistance for many Christians. A Salvadoran priest, Father Barrera, was led through his faith commitment to join a guerrilla group. While officially the hierarchical church would not accept this revolutionary option of Barrera, Archbishop Romero did respond. When he learned that Barrera lay dying after an attack by the National Guard, Romero legitimized the witness of the guerrilla priest by going to his side.

The blood of Barrera, Romero, four North American missionaries and 13,000 Salvadorans places an historical claim, not only on religious people but on all North Americans, to choose sides. As Ita Ford said in one of her last letters to Maryknoll president Melinda Roper: "...If we have a preferential option for the poor as well as a commitment to justice...we're going to have to take sides in El Salvador. Correction. We have." ■

Renny Golden is a former nun who teaches at Northeastern Illinois University.

ROBERTA LYNCH

Reagan campaign themes are now going south

NOT LONG AGO THE *NEW York Times Magazine* printed one of its rare "human interest" articles—an in-depth look at Barberton, Ohio.

The piece told how the town was facing the loss of its industrial base—tire manufacture—with a brave smile and a stout heart. It might have gone over well in Manhattan, but I couldn't imagine anybody buying this tale in Chicago or Youngstown. Experience in these and other cities and towns strewn across what was once our industrial heartland have dramatically demonstrated that the aftermath of a plant closing is a deadly piece of business—killing off faith in the future, community stability, and even human beings.

Our new president has made something of a career of enshrining the past—some might even say reinventing the past. His

Talk about peace, family, work and religion struck a chord in most people's lives.

speeches hearken back to a mythic golden age of small shopkeepers, white picket fences and invisible minorities. This kind of empty rhetoric might be passed off as the coinage of political communication in the U.S. today were it not for the way that he has sought to link it to certain elements that have in fact been central to our heritage.

Peace, family, neighborhood, religion, work—those are the themes that Reagan's initial campaign salvo claimed, and that he has reiterated in the ensuing months. They represent a cogent statement not of political issues, but of the essential foundations of most people's lives, and for that reason carry an emotional resonance beyond the normal election verbiage.

Yet it can only be a dangerous naivete or a cynical dishonesty that leads Reagan to portray himself as a defender of these elements. For the simple fact is that he comes to office in the midst of an enormous shift in our patterns of life and work—a shift that is destroying the very institutions he claims to revere, and a shift that he shows every sign of accelerating.

Our industrial base is in crisis. The manufacturing industries that have sustained our economy and shaped our identity—for the better part of a century are in decline. The failure to modernize combined with the search for ever higher profits and ever cheaper labor has led American capital to shift investment abroad or to concentrate on high return ventures within our borders. The impact of this disinvestment has been one of the best-kept secrets of our political discourse.

Like some haywire Frankenstein lumbering across our country, the logic of multinational capitalism is destroying our communities and unsettling our most basic social and economic arrangements. And yet this drastic alteration in our entire social fabric is carefully avoided in all the talk of a "new beginning." If we are beginning something new, then something old must be ending—and that is precisely the issue that our president and his advisors would prefer to avoid with all the talk of tax cuts and budget cuts. For what is being phased out of existence is the complex nexus of family, neighborhood, religion and work that has provided the framework in which most people



live out their lives—our communities.

It all might have been left hidden away in the corporate boardrooms and presidential chambers were it not for this profound impact on daily life. But beginning with Youngstown, Ohio, and spreading to other areas, there has been a determination to expose the human dimension of this false "realism" and to resist its im-

plementation. Community organizations, churches and unions have joined together to protest the closing down of our industry, to point out the devastation that results, and to demand a re-examination of the policies that foster this process.

While government has pretended to a kind of blind neutrality on this trend—laying the blame at the door of the uncontrollable hand of the market economy, the picture that has begun to emerge in the light of greater public scrutiny is a very different one. Under Carter, the President's Commission for National Agenda for the '80s actually recommended that the federal government should seek to foster the decline of our older industrial areas by encouraging the transfer of resources—both material and human—to the Southwest.

Now, under Reagan, it looks as if this approach will quickly be put into effect. According to several Representatives from the Northeast and Midwest, Reagan's proposed budget cuts show a definite bias in favor of the South and will likely have the heaviest consequences for those older areas of the nation that are already suffering from the loss of jobs and tax revenues.

Moreover, even as this debate begins to emerge into the public eye, it largely takes the form of pitting one area of the country against the other. Few of our elected officials have been willing to ask

the far more basic questions of investment policy—those that deal with the flight of capital abroad and the shift toward a service/technology economy in the U.S.

Reagan's proposed "industrial policy"—massive and unrestricted tax write-offs—will do nothing to address the industrial decline of our own nation. In fact, his proposals, in their present form, will likely only serve to hasten that decline.

With it will inevitably come the further deterioration of our communities—the further destruction of people's lives. No amount of empty homage to peace, family, neighborhood, religion and work will be able long to conceal the fact that these are the elements most imperiled by this process.

The question is whether those people and institutions most affected will be able to move beyond local resistance to develop a larger strategy and to begin to have a national impact. Only by their combined activity can this process be challenged. As one unemployed steelworker put it: "I feel like this country is going backwards. It's not what they promised us. You work your whole life and then you're left with nothing to show for it. Somebody's got to try to turn it around. Maybe it's us."

Roberta Lynch is a leader of the New American Movement, a democratic socialist organization.



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Cancer

Continued from page 7

vestigation, Michael Bennett claims it was "just a matter of common sense." UAW industrial hygienist Dan MacLeod has a better grasp on the nature of Bennett's accomplishment. In effect, he says, Bennett "invented" epidemiology from scratch.

Epidemiology is the study of the causes of disease by tracing it in human populations. The classic father of epidemiology was London physician John Snow who in 1855 traced an epidemic of cholera to the unsanitary drinking water provided by one of London's myriad private water companies. Any effective epidemiological study of occupational disease must ask three basic questions: Is there a health problem among a specific group of workers? If so, is it work-related? And, if it is work-related, what is the agent or process in the plant that appears to be causing the problem?

On his own, Michael Bennett answered the first of these questions. He developed persuasive information on the "health status" of Coldwater Road workers by comparing the causes of death in his study population to the national average—what epidemiologists call a "proportional mortality ratio."

Soon after he was elected local union president in 1978, Bennett discovered a file of letters from the company notifying the local each time a former Coldwater Road employee had died. The letters were the result of an agreement between GM and the UAW that originally had nothing to do with health and safety. The company informs each union local whenever it pays out a benefit under the collective bargaining agreement—in this case, life insurance benefits to the families of the deceased union members.

From this information, Bennett compiled a master list of 225 Coldwater Road workers who died over a five-year period from January 1, 1974 to December 31, 1978. Then, working from union listings

of his subjects' last known addresses, he began a massive search of public records for their death certificates. Most were found in Genesee County where the plant is located. But some came from states as far away as Arizona and Florida.

Once he had the death certificates, Bennett spent almost a full year on what he calls "the most difficult part" of his study—developing categories for the "cause of death" listed on the certificates and comparing them to national statistics. "We did it all manually," he says. "We didn't have a computer or anything."

When he finally completed his study in March, 1980, Bennett had uncovered dramatic findings. Eighty-two of his 225 subjects died of cancer—36.4 percent in a study population for which 20 percent was the national norm. The excess in cancer deaths was almost totally accounted for by lung cancer. There were twice as many lung cancer deaths as national figures would lead one to expect. And for the white women in his study, Bennett's findings were especially disturbing. The lung cancer ratio was three-and-one-half times the national rate.

The UAW's health and safety staff learned of Bennett's study at the same time as General Motors and the press. "We were pretty flipped out when we saw it, because it was so good," says Dan MacLeod. "It was a very sophisticated study. We kept asking, 'who is this guy?'"

Dr. Michael Silverstein, an epidemiologist on the union health and safety staff, carefully reviewed Bennett's findings. "Immediately, it became apparent that Mike had thought through the problem in precisely the same way that an epidemiologist would have thought it through. As soon as I saw the way he designed the thing, I knew it was something to be taken very seriously, very quickly."

But while Bennett's study clearly demonstrated an increased occurrence of cancer, were these cancers work-related? Here, the UAW's health and safety staff both validated and extended the original findings. Records from the international union's pension files expanded the study

population to 238. Union experts also made a few minor technical changes—for example, redesigning the categories for cause of death so that they corresponded to the International Classification of Disease system, and adjusting the comparisons in Bennett's study for age, sex, race, and year of death. When the reorganized data were plugged in to an elaborate epidemiological computer program developed at the Harvard School of Public Health and recently added to the UAW computer, staffers not only confirmed Bennett's findings but were able to demonstrate that the "exposure situation"—that is, the number of years each worker worked in the plant—was directly related to the occurrence of cancer. The lung cancer excess became greater as years of work in the plant increased, a solid indication that the cancers at Coldwater Road were work-related.

Union health and safety professionals went one step further. By means of a "case control study" comparing the job histories of those workers in the study population who had died from cancer with those of workers who had not, they tried to discover whether work in any particular job or department placed people at a higher risk. Because of the limited data available, says Michael Silverstein, the results of the case control study were "suggestive, but not finely enough tuned for the purposes we want."

At this point, no one knows for sure what caused the cancers of Coldwater Road, but union experts have their suspicions. Besides known carcinogens such as chromates and nickel, the key suspect is a class of chemicals known as "polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons" or PAHs. Produced whenever organic matter such as gasoline or oil is burned, there are some 1,000 chemicals in the PAH family. Some of them are carcinogenic; some are not. One PAH, benzo-(a)-pyrene, has been identified as a hazard for coke-oven workers.

UAW health and safety professionals speculate that the smoke from oil and lubricants used in the die casting process may have exposed workers to similar substances. But PAH exposure in a die casting operation has not been adequately studied, and discovering the exact PAH one is facing is technically difficult. "We have serious concerns about PAHs in the industry," says Silverstein, "concerns backed up by a substantial amount of documentation. But with respect to this particular plant, we don't have the data to point the finger at PAHs as opposed to other chemicals."

That illusive certainty.

This lingering uncertainty has shaped the negotiations between the UAW and General Motors about what to do at Coldwater Road and about occupational cancer in general. The UAW has adopted a preventive approach that considers any indication, however preliminary, of high cancer rates as grounds for "presumptive action." While conditions at Coldwater Road have improved considerably over the last 10 years, union experts say there are still changes to be made. Moreover, new hazards are probably being introduced along with the toxic substances used in urethane plastics production. "We don't really know what the risks are with these new materials," explains Silverstein.

For that reason, the union is negotiating with GM for action in three areas: increased medical surveillance of the Coldwater Road workforce, including worker education programs about occupational cancer; further epidemiological research; and engineering controls to protect workers from potential hazards. Says Silverstein, "We want to take the steps today that are going to avoid having another Michael Bennett report 10 years down the road."

In contrast to the union's preventive approach however, General Motors has emphasized the cautious search for scientific certainty—hard proof linking high cancer rates to specific substances in the workplace. While recognizing what one corporate spokesman termed "the heightened concern about cancer among workers at Coldwater Road," the corporation is still unwilling to admit that these cancers were contracted on the job.

"The only thing we know is that it appears there is an elevated incidence of

cancer of the lung," says Dr. Robert Wiencek, director of occupational safety and health for General Motors. "Is it due to workplace exposures? Sure, it could be. But it could also be something else. We really don't know enough about the problem to say. The indications are there; there is no doubt about that. But we need more time."

Union officials say that despite disagreements between company and union over the exact significance of Bennett's findings, their very existence—not to mention the attention they have received—has forced the corporation to act. So far, GM has agreed to an early warning cancer detection system at the plant and an industrial hygiene survey to measure current exposure levels (a first step in the discussion about new engineering controls). A proportional mortality ratio study is also underway at a sister plant of the Flint facility. And Sloan Kettering has been contracted to conduct a more thorough "standardized mortality ratio" study of Coldwater Road workers. "We will do everything we can to try to find the scientific reason for this," said a GM spokesman. "After all, they are our employees, too."

The last line of defense.

The lesson of Coldwater Road for UAW health and safety professionals is that worker studies like Michael Bennett's can be the opening wedge in negotiations with the automobile companies about cancer policy. "Coldwater Road is a milestone," says union industrial hygienist Dan MacLeod. "It sort of gelled our ideas about doing this sort of thing on a wider basis."

For nearly three years the UAW health and safety staff has been discussing how best to tackle the cancer issue. "We've been talking about, 'how do we do research? What's our strategy?'" Michael Bennett's study demonstrated that workers can collect their own data without having to depend on management. "All of a sudden, Mike provided an answer," explains MacLeod. "This is the way we can go. It involves our local people and gives us a way to collect information without having to go to the company. We've found this really important: to be able to say to the locals, 'here are some things that you can do.'"

To encourage this kind of rank-and-file initiative and expertise, the UAW has developed a comprehensive occupational cancer program, designed to provide an international union support system for prompt, short-term epidemiological investigations of potential hazards. The union has published a handbook for local officials entitled *The Case of the Workplace Killers: A Manual for Cancer Detectives on the Job*. It explains how workers can collect epidemiological data on their own and when they should come to the international for help. The union also has an arrangement with the state of Michigan making it easier for locals to get death certificates directly from the state, thus avoiding time-consuming county-by-county searches. And when the death certificates have been collected, the union's computer is available to analyze the data compiled by the locals.

Since health and safety regulation has become a prime target for the Reagan Administration (and Michael Bennett's fellow Michiganiian of the Year, budget director David Stockman), this rank-and-file labor approach to workplace cancer is all the more necessary. OSHA's new cancer policy, launched almost a year ago, has already been hobbled by the Supreme Court's benzene decision of last summer, which challenged the regulatory principle of "lowest feasible exposure." And one of the first acts of Raymond Donovan's Labor Department was to cancel public hearings on a proposed OSHA standard to give workers the right to know what substances their employers are using in the workplace.

So while corporations wait for scientific certainty, and the federal government backs away from its commitment to worker health and safety altogether, it will be up to labor to keep the occupational cancer issue alive. This, anyway, is Michael Bennett's hope. What the UAW Cancer Program will mean, he says, is that "there are going to be a lot more studies like my own."

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Reform marches East

The Road to Gdansk

By Daniel Singer
Monthly Review Press, New York, 1981, 256 pp., \$15.00

By David Ost

Gdansk appears to be the watershed the non-Stalinist, Marxist left has been waiting for. A working-class revolt in Eastern Europe—the dream of socialists unwilling to accept “U.S. capitalism” and “Soviet socialism” as the only possible alternatives. But what are we to make of Poland today? Where is it going? Who are the masses (whom the media insists on calling “Lech Walesa”)? And, most importantly, is there any hope for its success?

People's hopes for “real” socialism—the kind Marx talked about—have been cautiously revived. Each new Solidarity victory unanswered by Soviet tanks removes one more layer of caution.

Daniel Singer's new book, *The Road to Gdansk*, sets out to do what left anti-Stalinists since Trotsky have tried to do: develop a Marxist critique of the USSR and East Europe, and locate the possibilities for a “true” socialist transformation in those countries. If only 80 pages of the book directly concern Poland, this is because the manuscript was completed several months before last summer's strikes. A concluding chapter based on interviews with Solidarity organizers was added later, along with the title. Yet the book is not mistitled. A chapter dealing with the structural crises of the USSR is essential for understanding why change in the Soviet camp is not only possible but necessary. And the opening chapter on Solzhenitsyn tries to bring out the significance of this justly- and unjustly-maligned literary giant.

Solzhenitsyn is a problem not so much for an East European socialist opposition as for the Western left, which has found it impossible to take a stand. If we praise Solzhenitsyn we appear to join the right-wing chorus directed against the very possibility of socialism. If we denounce him, we're indicted for defending the Gulag. And if we remain silent we are seen as part of a cover-up.

Leftists not in power are always humanists. Leftists out of power may not support socialists in power, but they don't want to condemn them either. This is the problem that Solzhenitsyn's appearance posed, a problem, according to Singer, that can only be resolved by the left developing its own critique of “actually existing socialism.”

Singer calls for a self-criticism of the Marxist left and the societies where it obtains. But he is often unclear about what should be criticized. Do we reassess Leninism? Singer's reply is ambiguous. At one point he seems to argue that the wrongs of the '20s were due to “coping inadequately” (p. 36) with major social upheavals, and implies that future Leninists need only to ponder their decisions

more carefully. However, on the next page he states that the vanguard party, the dictatorship of the proletariat, “the action of Lenin or even the teachings of Marx,” must be critically reassessed.

One category that Singer never reassesses is “the working class.” The working class in the USSR and Poland, just like the working class in the West, “remains potentially the revolutionary class” (p. 102).

I'm not convinced that this view is wrong, but I'm not sure what it means. What is “the working class” in East European society? In Poland, those who gathered in Lenin Shipyards last summer and in the Solidarity halls today are much more than “workers.” Among the demands that the Interfactory Strike Committee presented to the government as the terms for ending the Gdansk strike was one calling for “spinal ailments to be recognized as an occupational hazard of dental surgeons.” Hardly a traditional “working class” demand!

There are other questions posed by the Polish events that Singer doesn't tackle head-on. What is the relationship between party and class? If the trade unions are the legitimate representatives of the working class, who does the party represent? If the trade unions represent immediate interests and the party historical interests, on what grounds does the party claim its privileged position? More important, would a “true” ruling communist party also have such differences with the working class?

The USSR.

The second, and longest, chapter of the book is titled “The Soviet Union: The Seeds of Change.” Here, Singer makes a very gloomy assessment of the Soviet economy, but argues that this situation holds out hope for positive change. The problem is that today the USSR finds it increasingly difficult, in the absence of economic reform, to achieve past growth rates. Economic reform, however, has serious political implications. As Czechoslovakia made clear, there is no economic reform without political reform. Indeed, the Soviet “reforms” of 1965 were aborted because of their political implications: a decentralized economy would leave the CPSU with nothing to do. Moreover, an economy where profitability was really important would have to allow “rationalization” of the factory, which translates into allowing unemployment. But this would break the social peace and the unwritten social contract, where workers are guaranteed property rights over their job in return for refraining from independent political activity.

Singer argues that until now the Soviets haven't really needed reform. Labor was young and plentiful, and natural resources were abundant. There was still possibility for expansion

through extensive rather than intensive growth. But now the USSR is not growing. It will no longer be able to guarantee a job for all and a steadily increasing standard of living without a reform.

The Soviet Union is trapped. Singer calls Brezhnevism “the highest stage of rule by the party apparatus.” The next step, he says, will be economic reform. This will provoke class conflict. If job rights are challenged, the workers will not give up easily. Even the official trade unions defend workers' jobs: it is about all they protect. Unfortunately, Singer makes the usual error of dismissing Soviet trade unions as a complete sham. The fact that they do defend jobs against managers only strengthens his argument: a real drive for “rationalization” of the workplace might provoke a major crisis by driving even the official trade unions into opposition.

I am not as optimistic as Singer that all this augurs well for the working class. In the struggle against the party apparatus, the technocrats and the workers will have much in common: both oppose the wasteful and illegitimate privileges of the apparatus. But will this opposition coalesce around the program of the workers or the program of the technocrats? The situation in Poland seems to indicate that the workers will triumph. But the Soviet Union is not Poland. The leader of the Free Association of Soviet Workers was put in a psychiatric hospital in 1978, while Lech Walesa was free to agitate openly in Gdansk.

There is one important implication of Singer's analysis that he does not draw. The USSR's economic crisis, and its inability to undertake economic reform without political reform, may provide one explanation for why the USSR has not sent its tanks into Poland. For some years now, the Soviets have been trying to distance themselves economically from Poland. Eastern Europe has become a large burden on the Soviet economy. But economic decoupling requires a rationalization of Poland's economy. Without the economic reform, Poland will continue to burden the USSR's economy. But without a political reform, there will be no meaningful economic change. The Soviets may now realize that the price paid for lessening their East European burden is to allow political reform there. If Singer's analysis of the state of the Soviet economy is correct, Soviet tanks may be farther from the Polish border than most of us think.

But have we not lost the road to Gdansk? Indeed, Poland enters the book only “as an example” of what can happen in East Europe. Singer doesn't attempt to probe the economic crisis as it has developed in Poland, and this is unfortunate. It lends legitimacy to the erroneous view that these countries are simply appendages of the USSR. But Singer does give an exciting history of the Polish workers

movement, from the uprising of 1970-71, through the short but successful protests of 1976, which saw the beginning of worker-intellectual unity, up to the events of 1980.

Here Singer's talent as a chronicler of revolutionary history emerges. Unfortunately, Singer was not a participant in the recent Polish upheavals; but Singer still tells a better story than most. He quotes generously from the transcripts of Giermek's meeting with the shipworkers of Szczecin in January 1971, and supplies us with interesting information on the direct democracy of the Szczecin strike committee. The final chapter discusses the similar democratic mechanisms in the 1980 strike committees.

One aspect of the Polish workers' struggle that Singer stresses is the egalitarianism of the movement. The workers have always insisted on higher pay increases for the lower-paid workers. And as recent strikes in Bielsko-Biala and Jelenia Gora have demonstrated, they are hostile to the retention of any special privileges by the elite.

“We don't mind tightening our belts, as long as there are none loosening theirs,” Singer sees this attitude as the stuff of genuine socialist opposition, which he sees emerging through-

into the religious euphoria of the present? Singer attributes this to the “ideological and political bankruptcy” of the regime, which has “succeeded in bestowing upon [the Church] a new virginity” (p. 190). The regime could provide no alternative to the Church, and the latter wisely “switched its slogans from the rights of property to the rights of man.”

Unfortunately, Singer doesn't ask what the prevalence of Catholicism really means. In a revealing footnote (p. 249) he tells us that some people felt the Pope's 1979 visit prepared the way for 1980 because, with the police conspicuously out of the way, people got a sense of running things on their own. This indicates that the Church might be more of a vehicle seized by workers and others to reclaim their history than a monolithic institution that has won the people to its creed. When an institution embraces so many people, serious divisions within it are inevitable. Although the official Polish Church is conservative, with no branch boasting the liberation theology that thrives in El Salvador or the Philippines, it might be the case that the workers understand Catholicism in a radically different manner than the hierarchy. It is, of course, not uncommon for the same id-

A specter is haunting Eastern Europe: the specter of the proletariat.



out East Europe. It may be. But I suspect that this egalitarian strand is more specific to the Polish working class than to Eastern Europe in general. Just as there is no one path to socialism in the West, we should not think there is only one road to socialist opposition in the East.

But Singer does not entirely miss the specificity of Poland. He doesn't ask whether the remarkable degree of unity achieved in such a short time by Solidarity is due to the ethnic and religious homogeneity of the population. (Poland is one of the very few countries in the world today without any significant minorities.) But he does come to grips with the Catholic Church. How did the profound anti-clericalism of pre-war Poland turn

eology to be understood in different ways. Certainly the Kronstadt workers understood the Russian Revolution differently than the Bolsheviks, yet they both considered themselves communists.

The Road to Gdansk is an important work that provides an historical background on the Polish workers' movement, and a theoretical perspective with which to understand its possibilities. Readers will get from it an awareness of Solidarity's promise as well as its predicament. It is a book that argues that there is still reason to hope. But then the Poles have shown us that already.

David Ost is a graduate student in Soviet-Polish studies at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

FILM

Catherine Deneuve encounters Nazis headquartered in Paris during World War II in *THE LAST METRO*.

Last Metro occupied with war

By Robert Schaeffer

The Last Metro is a sympathetic treatment of how Parisians coped with the German occupation during World War II. In contrast to *The Sorrow and the Pity*, which argued that most French men and women were not partisans but collaborators, Francois Truffaut suggests that some measure of accommoda-

tion was a necessary and even responsible part of resisting fascism. A sharp and unambiguous distinction between French patriots and collaborators is not easily made, Truffaut argues. People's response to a bad situation is complex. For those involved in a small Parisian theater company that response is that the show and their lives must go on, despite the horrors that take place just off-stage.

Lucas Steiner (Heinz Bennet), a Polish Jew who directs the company, flees the German invasion, but only gets as far as the cellar of the theater. In his not-too-distant absence his wife Marion (Catherine Deneuve) produces the play he had begun and struggles to maintain the fiction that he has escaped. She enlists Cottins (Jean Poiré), a homosexual, to direct the play and as leading lady acts opposite Bernard Granger (Gerard Depardieu), a hot-headed man-on-the-make with ties to the underground. Nadine (Sabine Haudepina), an ambitious young actress, Arlette (Andrea Ferreol), a lesbian set and costume designer, and not-so-jolly gopher (Maurice Risch) round out the crew. The obnoxious Nazi-connected theater critic Daxiat (Jean Louis Richard) brings some of the off-stage horror onto the set.

Some patriots would denounce any and all forms of accommodation during the war, and many critics have said that Truffaut is not tough enough on the actors who decide to go ahead with their play under these circumstances. These hard-line attitudes are represented in the film: a mother drags her son home and washes his hair after he is patted on the head by a passing German soldier; one of the actors tells the others that the Free French broadcast on the BBC warned that people who frequent nightclubs will be shot after the war, and leading man Bernard is militantly uncompromising with anything

that smacks of collaboration, at one point quitting the troupe to join the resistance.

But Truffaut suggests that this hardline view is simplistic. Everyone commits some *petit* treason: Nadine accepts rides from Germans, the stagehand tells an anti-DeGaulle joke to Daxiat, Cottins is indiscriminate about the nationality of his bedfellows, they all buy from a black-market profiteer with

another, her husband, produces the play to secure an income and conceal his hiding place, buys from the black market to feed him and acts with cool indifference to her fellow actors and takes an occasional lover to throw off suspicion. She resents Bernard for being self-righteous and for being an irresponsible patriot. His attempt to slug it out with Daxiat compromises the others and threatens his unseen director (Lucas, listening unseen at rehearsals, suggests changes in the play through Marion). Bernard and Marion's hostility is based on misunderstood intentions, created by a situation that forces them to cloak their actions and disguise their intentions—for good reason. Truffaut gently suggests that patriotism is not always best worn on the sleeve. Further, he implies that there can be some accommodation without guilt.

Borrowing.

The Last Metro bears a strong resemblance to *A Special Day*, the Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni film detailing a brief affair between a housewife and a homosexual in fascist Italy. Both view fascism through the eyes of people trying to get by, for whom the war is somewhat distant. Fascism intrudes into their lives by radio, or when planes fly overhead, but it doesn't kick down the doors and camp in their livingroom. Both films also make the point that under fascism the general populace lives under conditions similar to those that homosexuals must live under all the time in a straight society. Both films minimize anti-fascist rhetoric, common now in German films, and create an intelligible and compelling account of how people lived, coped and survived.

The Last Metro also borrows heavily from Truffaut's *Day for Night*, though here the play-within-the-play device is more accomplished. The play within the film is constructed more tightly and located more effectively in the wider political set. Marion's double life as cool entrepreneur and wife to a fugitive, the danger of discovery and the double meaning of words and actions sustain the drama better than his earlier effort. The use of actors as actors suits Truffaut's style. Except for the child actors in *400 Blows* and *Small Change*, who are quite naturalistic, Truffaut's characters tend to be camera conscious. They make few small gestures; their movements

El Salvador: Another Vietnam?

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Truffaut suggests that patriotism is not always best worn on one's sleeve.

links to the Gestapo, and—despite the Free French strictures—go out to nightclubs and make whoopee. Marion, for instance, goes out for drinks and picks up a man while her fugitive husband wraps himself in a shawl in the dank basement and tries to keep up his spirits doing fascist crossword puzzles ("Three-letter word for money-lender, starting with J...").

Much of the film, for example, turns on the growing antagonism between Marion and Bernard. He suspects her of anti-Semitism for turning a Jewish actor away from an audition, thinks her cold to the sufferings of others, and resents her seeming indifference to politics when she meets with Daxiat to secure a permit for the play from the propaganda ministry. But Marion turns away the Jew to protect

and speeches are always deliberate and considered. This self-conscious style works here because we can allow that these are actors acting, off-stage and on.

Catherine Deneuve's portrayal of Marion is effective and restrained. The effect of her double life and mixed emotions subtly tells on her, and we can recognize its effect because we come to know her. Heinz Bennet gives the film's finest performance in a scene where he discovers his escape plans have fallen through and he faces the prospect of living as a mole for the duration. Sabine Haudepina generates ambitious intensity and Jean Louis Richard is smoothly despicable as the point man for the new order in France. Gerard Depardieu looks the part and plays an effective counterpoint to Deneuve.

Tess is a Hardy movie

By Robert Schaeffer

Roman Polanski's *Tess* is the story of a rural working girl in Victorian England whose life seems to belong to others—parents, kinfolk, bosses, husband and master. Though circumstance and necessity dominate her life, and people more powerful than she attempt to command her obedience, Tess struggles to make her way in the world despite the consequences. The movie *Tess* is a subtle commentary on the nature of class, work and love in the late 19th century.

Tess is a remarkable character. She is an ingenue—a young girl without artifice or guile—but also a proud and determined woman. Nastassia Kinski effects the difficult character of resolute innocent with aplomb. She is not only charming to watch but able to compel interest by the force of her personality.

Social, economic and class forces threaten to cast Tess into penury and disgrace. The other people in the film are bound by economic necessity, obedient to social morality and loyal to class. But Tess is not. She insists on her right to choose and to love. She stands apart from the others because she chooses love over convention and is willing to give her life for that right.

Tess' rustic life is changed when her father, a poor tenant farmer, discovers the d'Urberville family descends from the noble Norman family d'Urberville. Her parents seize this opportunity to send Tess abegging to her namesakes. Her unscrupulous "cousin" Alexander Stoke-d'Urberville (Leigh Lawson) takes advantage of Tess. She leaves him, but bears his child. Tess is ostracized by the community and when the infant dies she leaves home. Working at a dairy she falls in love and marries Angel Clare (Peter Firth), a ne'er-do-well preacher's son. When she trustingly confides in him, he refuses to forgive her for bearing another man's child. "The woman I love is not you," he says, "but another in your shape."

Angel abandons her and heads for the colonies. Tess is reduced to poverty. Her father's death, her family's eviction from their home, and their impending des-

titution in the urban slums forces Tess to return to Alexander who has pursued her. He provides for her family so long as he can keep her as mistress. When Angel returns from his delusory travels abroad to find Tess, she must choose between husband-betrayer and master-provider.

Even though Tess is continually victimized—raped, compromised, scandalized, scorned, rejected and betrayed—she does not allow herself to become a victim. She refuses to resign herself to misfortune or accept her troubles as her only lot in life.

Class.

Polanski treats the pernicious effects of class on the characters in

colonist and husband—and who would be reduced to poverty but for his family's charity.

Work.

Tess occasionally rises above economic necessity, but work and hard labor are never far away. She works as chicken keeper, milk maid, grain reaper, turnip turner, wheat thresher, housewife and mistress. While Polanski devotes much of the film to work, he never romanticizes rural labor or exaggerates its industrial counterpart. He treats work throughout as an integral part of the story.

Polanski's unusual treatment of work deserves comment. In American films work is conspicuously absent. Typically

Polanski's *Tess* is a subtle commentary on the nature of class, work and love in Victorian England.

the film with subtlety. Tess' parents expect the d'Urberville title to change their condition. The scenes where Tess' father boasts of his heritage to his tolerating bar-mates, and her mother camps at the d'Urberville mausoleum expecting her new class to aid a "noble" family, are full of poignancy and undiminished expectations. But Tess knows that the title to nobility is not ennobling. Her d'Urberville kinfolks are really Stokes, who simply bought the title to advance their social status. Yet even when Tess is decked out in lace and crinolines as Alexander's mistress, even though she shares his name, she cannot ascend to his class.

Polanski follows the separation of rural labor from the land, its itinerant search for work and its migration into the city and the fall of the aristocracy through the changing fortunes of the d'Urbervilles. Their decrepit tomb is testimony to their decayed status. He notes the ascendance of the gentry-bourgeoisie, represented by the Stokes and Tess' rapacious benefactor Alexander, and monitors the vicissitudes of the middle class, a class that Angel Clare's family of preachers clings to with devotion, but from which Angel falls—falling successively as sheep farmer, dairy farmer,

people deal only with extraordinary circumstances, or they labor off camera. The only people consistently seen at work are professionals or those with glamorous jobs—private detectives, spies, policemen, lawyers, jewel thieves, rock stars, doctors, reporters, soldiers and hired guns—and occasionally those whose occupation is temporarily fashionable—truckers, cab drivers, hookers.

Some of the most memorable scenes in *Tess* are of work: Tess chasing chickens and whistling to parakeets, milking cows at dusk, uprooting turnips in freezing mud, and threshing wheat by lantern light. Polanski's gradual introduction of machinery into Tess' rural labors is a subtle comment on the transformation of work in 19th-century England.

The film's craft.

Although filmed in France, *Tess* evokes England's verdant landscapes, moors, hedgerows, country lanes and captures the detailed interiors of stone farm houses and graceful manors. The aura of fresh mown hay, salt sea breezes and close morning fogs linger on the screen.

Polanski uses relatively unknown actors as the film's principals. Kinski is on the screen for three hours, yet one never tires of watching her. The other actors are richly drawn and carefully composed. There are no stock roles and even the minor parts produce some real gems: the strange bewhiskered vagabond who appears to Tess on a road near a shrine, the leering old housekeeper who tucks Tess and Angel into their bridal chambers. That the secondary and tertiary characters are so good is a sure sign of craft.

Polanski is an innovative director. He pays close attention to detail and remains faithful to the kind of film he makes—"horror" film in *Fearless Vampire Killers*, "detective thriller" in *Chinatown*—but he then explores the genre's interior, expands its vocabulary, and transcends its confines.

Tess is a long film, and the Stonehenge ending is a bit obvious, but *Tess* rewards the effort with its own labors and treats the viewer to a compelling drama without ostentation. ■



Nastassia Kinski plays the lead in Polanski's *TESS*.

MONEY

Space is scarce for hoards of wealthy

By Josh Martin

Pity the poor rich, particularly if their wealth is invested in gold, jewels or *objets d'art*. Normally, they would stash their loot in a bank safety deposit box, but banks are now turning these gilt-edged customers away. It's the same story in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and points in-between. Large deposit boxes, the kind used to hold 50-carat diamonds, gold ingots and 14th century manuscripts, are in very short supply. In some instances, customers have to wait over a year to rent bank vault space the size of a footlocker.

"The shortage of large boxes has been developing over the

past three years," said Howard Weaver, a spokesman for New York's Citibank. "In some areas there is nothing available. When silver shot up in price [two years ago], there was a run on space. People are no longer keeping their valuables at home."

The demand for large safety deposit boxes, fueled by rising crime rates and insurance premiums, has pushed up prices. Annual rents for large boxes and vault space now start at \$100 and go up to \$50,000. What do you get for \$50,000? A small, subterranean room in a Wall Street bank vault. The bank has six such rooms, including one used by the U.S. Treasury. They are very popular: there are no vacancies.

Despite demand, banks aren't

rushing to install "nests" of large boxes; rentals aren't very profitable. However, specialized companies have sprung up around the country providing alternative vault space. The most spectacular of these is the Security Center in New Orleans. Housed in a former Federal Reserve building, the Security Center boasts a three-story vault protected by a 34-ton door and the latest electronic security systems. Customers have 24-hour access to the climate-controlled vault, which stores everything—computer tapes, securities, jewels, paintings and sculpture. The operation is insured by Lloyds of London.

Although storage rates are high compared to what banks

charge, no one's complaining. In addition to easy access and the insurance, Security Center officials point out that the company is not bound by red tape banking regulations. The selling point is security. "Our building is really a fortress," said Gilbert Paul Haan II, the manager. "Someone always has something they want to put in here, particularly things they may need on a 24-hour basis."

Ironically, while banks say there's no profit in renting safety deposit boxes, several have turned to the Security Center to store their own financial records. It's the banks' way of protecting their family jewels. ■

Josh Martin, a New York writer, reports on arts and the economy.

Grants

Continued from page 3

suggests that without matching requirements states and localities will reduce their own spending on social services. One recent study, for example, indicates that switching from matching grants for AFDC to a welfare block grant will result in a 16 percent reduction in real benefit levels. Or consider the following example:

Assume that Massachusetts now spends \$100 million on social services, of which \$75 million comes from a federal matching grant and \$25 million from local tax revenues. What will happen if the \$75 million matching grant is replaced with a \$75 million block grant whose only restriction is that it must be spent on social services? Will Massachusetts continue to spend \$100 million on social services? Probably not. In this period of fiscal retrenchment, state and local governments are under intense pressure either to reduce taxes or to shift the spending of inflation-ravaged tax dollars to "high priority" items such as police and public education. Massachusetts, for example, may reduce its social service spending from \$100 to \$90 million and reallocate \$10 million to other purposes.

Under the current matching grant system, that \$10 million cut in local spending would cost the state \$30 million in federal funds—a strong incentive not to do it. But under the Reagan plan, Massachusetts would still receive the same \$75 million block grant.

The potential for additional drastic cuts does not stop there. Not only will the new block grants immediately reduce federal funding by 25 percent over last year; the plan also calls for freezing federal social services expenditures at this same level through 1986. Even with the most optimistic projections about inflation, the same dollar amount will buy fewer services with each passing year.

Though no final decision has yet been made, it's likely that the new block grants will be allocated to states simply on the basis of population. By taking no account of where those in need of services actually live, such a formula will discriminate against Northeast and North Central states with slow population growth and high concentrations of poor and elderly.

Most important, the cuts in direct services to the poor coincide with other proposed reductions in food stamps, housing, education, community development, health care and mass transit that will all increase the needs of the already needy.

Andrew Reschovsky teaches economics at Tufts University.

Miners

Continued from page 3

their last job.

Another key fight centers on the Arbitration Review Board (ARB), a 1974 contract innovation that gives arbitrators, (all lawyers) the power to make decisions that are binding under both present and future contracts. As Jack McGuire, a miner working in Mt. Hope just north of Beckley, pointed out, "We have 29 articles in the contract and, at last count, over 400 ARB decisions."

George Spencer, a black miner who chairs the Mine Committee at East Gulf mine here in Raleigh County, complains that many ARB rulings are contradictory or confusing. "What it all boils down to," Spencer says, "is needing a clear, precise contract. Then there wouldn't be a need for an ARB. We need language that you don't need to be a Harvard lawyer to understand."

Though the coal operators clearly have a friend in the White House, they should not assume too quickly that this is the

year really to go after the UMW. The traditions of unity still run strong in these mountains and hollows, as the actions of the miners at Armco Steel's No. 7 mine on the Coal River during the last UMW strike illustrated. When they gathered in their little union hall in Sundial to vote on the second contract offer in 1978, they bucked the tide in the Appalachian coalfields and ratified. A few days later, when 70 percent of all union members had rejected the offer, Carter invoked a Taft-Hartley injunction. The Sundial miners met again and voted to defy Taft-Hartley—unanimously. Not a single union mine in the nation reopened, and the federal judge was forced to withdraw the injunction a week later.

If the companies think they can put one over on the miners this year—and use the government to enforce their will—they may soon hear a slogan similar to the one that echoed from the hills of western Pennsylvania to the pine woods of northern Alabama three years ago this month—"Taft can mine it, Hartley can haul it, and Reagan can shove it."

Paul J. Nyden writes for the *Gulf Times* of Raleigh County, West Virginia, and other publications.

Illegals

Continued from page 5

the commission's report, no single country may send any more than 20,000 immigrants yearly.

Voices of dissent.

The commission's hazy recommendations have understandably drawn sharp criticism, much of which has come from within the panel itself. No less than 12 commissioners were so dissatisfied that they issued individual opinions dissenting from parts of the report. Perhaps the sharpest dissents came from two liberal Californians who served as public members: Rose Matsui Ochi, an aide to Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, and Cruz Reynoso, a state court appellate judge from Sacramento.

Lambasting the commission's emphasis on law enforcement, Ochi decried the amnesty proposal as a "sham" that would deny any benefits to undocumented aliens who failed to meet continuous residency requirements set by Congress. Ochi also disputed the commission's perception of undocumented workers as a major cause of U.S. unem-

ployment. "Undocumented workers are a boon to the U.S. because they typically take jobs that Americans will not accept," she declared. "There is no evidence that undocumented migration constitutes a national calamity so damaging to the American people that it requires the kind of repressive enforcement measures being presented."

Commissioner Cruz Reynoso was equally strong in his critique of the majority report. While recognizing the need for immigration reform, Reynoso charged that the commission's report would "work even less well" than the existing Immigration Act. Reynoso rejected the commission's decision to retain current refugee policy without substantial amendment. Citing the discriminatory nature of current policy, Reynoso said, "By rushing to document dissident Russians and Cuban refugees and completely ignoring the plight of Haitians and Salvadorans, the U.S. helps to create part of the problem of the undocumented."

The commission's work also sparked objections from civil liberties organizations and Chicano rights groups. Peter Shey, director of the National Center for Immigrants' Rights, told *In These Times*: "The commission's report is a lost opportunity for progress. The call for a secure system of workers' identification

Continued on facing page

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

PITTSBURGH, PA

March 25

Carl Marzani, author of "The Promise of Euro-communism," will address the topic "Euro-Communism: A Model for American Socialists?" Responding will be members from CPUSA, NAM, DSOC, IS and SWP. At Forbes Quad, University of Pittsburgh at 8:00 p.m. For more information, call: Prof. John Beverley at (412)624-5225.

CLEVELAND, OH

March 27

Carl Marzani will discuss the subject of his new book, "The Promise of Euro-communism." At Cleveland State University, Main Classroom Building, Room 202, at 8:00 p.m. For more information, call: Jim Miller at (216)231-4265.

HARRISBURG, PA

March 28

Join 8 international unions marching for safe energy, for full employment, against Three Mile Island and for solidarity with Mineworkers' contract negotiations. Information: 717-232-0396, Labor Committee for Safe Energy and Full Employment, 1037 MacLay St., Harrisburg, PA 17103.

ILLINOIS

March 29-April 2

Raya Dunayevskaya, author of "Marxism and Freedom" and "Philosophy and Revolution," will speak on her new book, "Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution," 6:30 p.m., March 29, 220 S. State, Room 1326, Chicago; March 31, Loyola University, Chicago; April 2, Champaign-Urbana. Free and open. Sponsored by "News and Letters." (312)863-0839.

DETROIT, MI

April 1

Carl Marzani will speak on "The Promise of Euro-communism" at the Student Center of Wayne State University at 8:00 p.m. Call (313)368-6957 for more details.

CHICAGO, IL

April 2

The Second City Socialist School of the New American Movement presents a forum with Carl Marzani. "Prospects and Problems of Italian Euro-communism; the dialogue between the Church and Italian social movements." Thursday, at Schmidt Academic Center, Room 192, De Paul University, 2323 N. Seminary Ave. Admission is \$2.00.

April 3

Manning Marable, a founder of the National Black Independent Political Party and author-activist, will speak on "Reaganism, Racism, and Reaction" at the Augustana Lutheran Church, 5500 S. Woodlawn Blvd., at 7:30 p.m. Donation \$2. Sponsored by the Chicago Chapters of the New American Movement. For more information, call: (312)871-7700.

April 4

Carl Marzani will discuss and autograph his new book, "The Promise of Euro-Communism," at Guild Books and Periodicals, 1118 W. Armitage Ave., from 1-4 p.m. Call (312)752-1794 for additional information.

WASHINGTON, DC

April 4

The Congressional Black Caucus and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change will sponsor a convocation on the politics and ideas of Dr. King and their relevance for the 1980s. Three seminars will be held that reflect the major areas of concern of the Congressional Black Caucus. The first will be on Dr. King, full employment and economic justice. At the Rayburn House Office Building, in the Gold Room at 10:30 a.m. The second will concern Dr. King, civil and human rights. At Howard University at 10:30 a.m. The third will focus on Dr. King, foreign affairs and world peace. At the Institute for Policy Studies at 10:30 a.m.

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

April 6

Carl Marzani will speak on "The Promise of Euro-Communism" at the West Bank of the University of Minnesota at 8:00 p.m. Check for details on University bulletin boards.

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

April 9

Carl Marzani will discuss "The Promise of Euro-Communism" at the Regina Trade Union Center, 2709 12th Ave., at 8:00 p.m. For additional information, call: (306)352-9289.

SEATTLE, WA

April 11

Come to a fundraising party for *In These Times*. Music, dancing, refreshments and conversation. At PRAG House, 747 16th E., from 7:30 to midnight. Tickets are \$2.00. Call 634-2856 for more information.

SAN FRANCISCO AREA

Help Berkeley Citizen's Action (BCA) candidates win. Socialist mobilization on **March 21** for Voter Registration (meet at Socialist School, 6025 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, at 10:00 a.m.) **April 4** for San Francisco Day (meet at 3738 20th St., San Francisco at 9:00 a.m.) **April 11** for a Literature drop (meet at the BCA Office, 3126 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley at 10:00 a.m.). If you can phone, canvass, or contribute, want more information or a ride, call: Kerry Treman at (415)441-5466 (days) or 826-9178 (eves.).

DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

Citizens Energy Project
1110 6th Street, NW, #300
Washington, DC 20001

The Citizens Party-National Office
1605 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

The Citizens Party of Illinois
109 N. Dearborn, Suite 603
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 332-2066

Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy
120 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 413
Washington, DC 20036

DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee
853 Broadway, Room 801
New York, NY 10003

Midwest Academy
600 West Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614

National Center for Economic Alternatives
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

NAM-New American Movement
3244 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60657

New Patriot Alliance
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305
Chicago, IL 60604

Science for the People
897 Main Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Socialist Party
1011 N. 3rd St., No. 201
Milwaukee, WI 53203

The Effects of Nuclear War

Produced as background for SALT by the Office of Technology Assessment, this report analyzes several levels of nuclear exchange, and estimates the immediate loss of human life and the 'collateral' damage—to hospitals, the water and food supply, and so forth—that would affect the chances of survivors. ("... A bomb falling in the vicinity of the University of Detroit... 1,000,000 estimated immediate casualties; one-half million in need of medical attention... half the hospitals in the city have been obliterated...") The report has been called 'astounding' and 'a blockbuster.' It is, in the event, the first of its kind that is not a defense analysis, and is, in the present state of the predictive art, probably truthful. It speaks not only to the specific issues debated in SALT, but to the risks inherent in calculating a limited nuclear exchange, and to the contradictions that increasingly appear to vitiate the politics of deterrence. It is available in a hardbound edition for \$9.95 from your bookstore, or from the publisher.

ALLANHELD, OSMUN & Co. 19 Brunswick Rd Montclair, NJ 07042

Continued from facing page.

paves the way for creation of a national identity card and threatens the civil liberties of all Americans. The amnesty proposal is unworkable and unfair and the commission failed to approve a much-needed special quota for Mexico, which supplies over 60 percent of undocumented immigration and deserves more than 20,000 visas a year."

One of the most shortsighted aspects of the majority report, Schey added, is that the commission completely ignored the global and economic dimensions of the immigration issue. According to Schey, no increase in law enforcement activities by the Border Patrol will reduce illegal immigration until policymakers realize that economic underdevelopment in the Third World is a fundamental cause of unauthorized migration and that U.S. foreign policy has consistently undermined Third World economies.

While Reagan has not yet taken a position on the commission's findings, two significant trends are already clear. One is the new administration's revival of gunboat diplomacy with an emphasis on military aid for client states. The decision to supply the Duarte junta in El Salvador with weapons and advisors is only the most blatant example. Several of Reagan's top advisors also favor withholding food, medicine and other supplies from defiant Third World countries. Such an outlook can only exacerbate the United States' immigration problems.

But Reagan is also known to support

some form of guest-worker program and has announced plans to discuss the topic when he meets in April with Mexican President Jose Lopez-Portillo. Reagan clearly hopes to play both sides of the border on this one: Lopez-Portillo has said he is "intrigued" with the idea of guest-worker programs and Reagan's strong Southwest agribusiness constituency would be delighted with a cheap expendable work force. Any such plan is sure to meet with vociferous opposition from both organized labor and Hispanic activists who recall the abuses of the Bracero Program, a guest-worker plan that operated between 1942 and 1964.

Reagan is expected to turn the Select Commission's report over to the Senate Judiciary Committee's new subcommittee on immigration, chaired by Sen. Al Simpson (R-Wyo.). A blunt nativist, Simpson is a leading proponent of tougher immigration laws. Unafraid of being labeled a "clod or a Neanderthal or a racist," Simpson says he "can wade right in without being bothered by all this emotional crap underneath."

Solutions to the thorny immigration issue eluded the Carter administration and will no doubt continue to plague Reagan. Reagan's responses, springing from his "Raw Deal" economic philosophy, will be sure to spark indignation and protest from a well-organized, activist and—most important—growing Hispanic population.

Bill Blum is a California writer who has written for several magazines. Gina Lobaco is a Los Angeles writer.

Carnaval

Continued from page 24

most prestigious *escolas* there are still traces of resistance. One of the top-rated *escolas* this year chose as its theme a denunciation of multinationals and inflation.

In Salvador several groups that used an Indian theme consulted with the indigenous expert Olympio Serra. One of them organized an exposition in its neighborhood on the violation of Brazilian Indians' human rights. The *Xavante* Indian chief Mario Jurena, who has testified before the Bertrand Russell Tribunal, also gave a speech there during *Carnaval*. Opposition groups including gays, Indians and blacks also organized a counterevent to the mayor's "heart"-felt *Carnaval*—

a dance named after Oxum, an African god.

Still, organized protest and recovery of tradition was slight compared either with the massive tourist displays or with the frenetic, even painful energy of the masses who crowded the streets. For most Brazilians who celebrated a *Carnaval* that moved further each year from its local and its popular roots, it was a time to forget: to forget the soaring unemployment rate, the never-ending double-digit monthly inflation, the bad news implied by Brazil's recent resort to the IMF. The cost of that lost weekend kind of forgetfulness was marked, among other things, by predictable morning-after headlines such as one in Sao Paulo's major newspaper: "374 assaults, 46 deaths, 872 robberies, and 706 street fights."

The progressive Brazilian weekly *Movimento* furnished much of the data for this article.



Steve Kagan

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CHASTISEMENT OF CHASE BANK (Reply to the Reagan monomania) by Abram Eiserman. "Excellent! I liked every word." John Kenneth Galbraith. "I liked your chasing, too" Anthony Lewis. For copies, send \$1.00 to A.E., 234 E. 48, Savannah, GA 31405.

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A NEW PUBLIC FOUNDATION providing grants to social change organizations in Texas is seeking a fulltime senior staff administrator starting May 1, 1981, to coordinate outreach and grant procedures, oversee office and staff operations, assist a statewide funding council and committees of the Board. Knowledge of Texas, self-motivation, ability to work independently, experience with grassroots organizations and citizen activism, public speaking, community relations, supervisory and organizational skills required. Fluency in Spanish preferable. Office located in Austin, Texas; some statewide travel necessary. Salary negotiable. Send resume and references to P.O. Box 4601, Austin, TX 78735, by April 1.

STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBER seeks attorney for community-based advocacy work. General practice. Some experience and a desire to help people is a must. Salary open. Send resume to: Office Manager, 6808 Bay Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11214.

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WERE YOU THERE? 1931-32 Hunger Marchers, please contact: Herbert Benjamin, Box 4039 Harwood-D, C.V. Deerfield, FL 33441.

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Carnaval changes its tune

The government tampers
with Brazil's popular festival



By Pat Aufderheide

BRAZILIAN CARNAVAL, WHICH ended March 4, is probably the most spectacular festival in the world. For three days the ordinary business of life stopped while people danced to the Afro-Brazilian beat of samba, celebrating not only the last moments before Lent but also the release from the daily life marked, for the vast majority of the population, by unrelenting privation. More than relief, it is a sharp and vivid commentary on the conditions of daily life.

Increasingly *Carnaval* is the prize object of Brazilian commercial interests, of the fashion-conscious consumer class, and of the military government. And those forces, while exploiting its popular connotations, are also inexorably changing *Carnaval*.

Essential to the festival is the sound of samba, with its rich African traditions stressing rhythm instruments and participation by everyone—even if it's by shaking match boxes or hitting a tin can with a stick. Throughout the year people organize in *blocos*, groups of friends and neighbors who dance together in the streets. In the clubs called *escolas de samba*, professional musicians and dancers practice year-round for the *Carnaval* parade, where they represent an elaborately costumed allegory acting out a theme.

The myth of *Carnaval* is its democratic nature—rich and poor equal for a day, their social roles masked by costumes and by the right to dance to the same music. In fact, *Carnaval* is a social inversion more than a rare moment of democracy: the poor become rich for a day in the streets, while the rich and the middle class either party in clubs or pay to watch the poor. Sex roles become objects of play—transvestism is a traditional part of *Carnaval*. The cultural traditions scorned by the elite in daily life—African and Indian, for example—are asserted often romantically in the *Carnaval* groups, scenes and costumes. *Carnaval* has also traditionally been a free time for social criticism in a society that has never encouraged open debate. Some of the best samba lyrics have also been singing criticisms of the cruelties of class privilege. And police forces concoct strategies each year to contain the spontaneity of these groups.

Disco Samba.

But the business of *Carnaval* is changing

the tradition. Perhaps the most notable is the decline of vitality in *Carnaval* music. Some trace the present vapidness of the music—often mixed with the commercial disco sound these days and blasted through electronic street speakers rented by the government—back decades. In the '20s, the radio made *Carnaval* popular at a mass level, making it possible for strangers on the street to sing and dance to the same popular song. But it also provided a limited forum for a host of eager composers who eventually fell victim, according to some of the more traditional song writers, to a lowest-common-denominator programming.

Equally severe, claim others, has been the effect of mass government censorship. The post-1964 military government has not been fond of lyrics like the popular "I work like a dog/I get calloused hands/but my boss gets rich and I stay poor/so that's why now I changed my mind/and I won't work, I won't work, I won't work." Nor is it fond of the topical traditionist songs, such as "*Favela Anarela*" (Yellow Slum). Written after Rio de Janeiro's tourism director ordered slums to be painted to lessen the shock of the sight for tourists, the song comments, "What an irony/they paint the slums/to water down the color of poverty."

The government instead gives a hard sell—saturation air-play, free copies of lyrics, mandatory use of the song in parade—to its own compositions, such as the 1972 "I love you, my Brazil, I love you/my heart is the color of the flag." The military regime is happy to spend huge sums on *Carnaval*, on the bread and circuses principle, as long as it controls the content.

These days the government soft-pedals censorship, but the topical song tradition has not revived. Perhaps, as samba composer Paulinho da Viola says, that is because of the current state of the recording industry. Because of the tunes' short sales time, the volume-oriented internationally-dominated record industry shows little interest in promoting them—and so composers can't afford to write them.

Show Business.

The *escolas de samba* of Rio de Janeiro also betray the cost of profit on popular expression. Once a popular art form and an example of community solidarity in Rio's poorest neighborhoods, the *escolas* are now a core item in Brazil's most lucrative tourist package. The government tourist agency provides funds annually to the *escolas*. Political parties also vie to fund them in neighborhoods where their constituency needs strengthening.

The *escolas* are rated by the tourist agency in three quality-ranked classes. "Quality" has a lot to do with the level of show business flash the group can demonstrate. In expensive costumes the groups dance in an all-night parade, for which tickets—often at scalpers' sky-high prices—are sold. Judges' decisions determine the amount of the next year's funding for the group. The parade is also broadcast on national television. *Carnaval* thus takes on aspects of a spectator sport with many staying home to watch "electronic *Carnaval*." In the streets the unofficial groups—the *blocos* and individuals—must wait until the parade has passed.

In the more traditional town of Salvador, where the African tradition is probably the strongest anywhere in Brazil, *Carnaval* has always been a street festival of the poor and black. These days it has become an affair of by-subscription-only *blocos* that crowd the unorganized off the streets.

The organization that sells *Carnaval* has followed the fashion of a folklore-thirsty tourism. When a decade ago Rio's parade became a ticket affair for the first time and Rio began to fill up with foreigners during *Carnaval*, Brazilians flocked to Salvador for the "real thing." Now, in a kind of cultural cannibalism, they head farther north to Recife where the selling of *Carnaval* is just beginning.

Carnaval themes are the favorite toy of government ideologues. Perhaps the

most blatant example of propaganda this year took place in Salvador. There the mayor simply abolished the standing tradition of a popularly-elected city theme, choosing instead the symbol of his own government—a heart. Then he ordered official music to fit, called "Let the heart have its way." Finally he decorated the city streets with gigantic electric hearts that pulsate in time with music from the sound trucks that wind slowly through the streets bringing dancers behind them.

One congressman called it an example of the dictatorship's "new populism" saying, "City Hall has mounted an immense billboard advertisement for the mayor throughout the city." Outraged, the city's composers, artists and some *blocos* filed a complaint that the mayor had "transformed *Carnaval* into an electoral campaign."

Protests.

But it's not all rank exploitation. In the nation's capital, Brazilia, the *bloco* organized by journalists danced with signs criticizing the government, singing a song stolen from a tire commercial put to lyrics about inflation and hunger. Also in Brazilia, gays formed a sensationally costly *bloco* and held their own events. In Sao Paulo a women's group called "Movement Against Want" joined with groups from poorer neighborhoods to carry and wear empty cooking pots in their *blocos*.

There still exists at least one *escola de samba* with no show business pretensions—*Quilonvo* (*Quilonvos* were runaway slave encampments), in a Rio slum. Started by composers frustrated with commercial sounds, the group uses only a pittance of government funds, refuses to compete and searches out varied folk traditions. "What we want," explained one founder, "is to bring in all popular arts since all of it has roots in black culture." The *escola* also emphasizes black tradition and heroes. Even among the

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